Canadian Journal of
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL
THEORY

Habermas

Van Gogh

Berger

Keynes

Magritte

Johnson

Gadamer

Metz

Foucault

Le Corbusier

Nietzsche

Thompson

Williams

Offe

Saussure

Fifth Anniversary
DOUBLE ISSUE

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Contents

THE WARRING SUBJECT

This special double issue celebrates the fifth anniversary of publication of the Journal. A moment of self-reflection on the intellectual project of the review, on what are really the editorial principles which have guided the theoretical development of the Journal, is not inappropriate. I would think that the intellectual vitality of the review is a sign, and a hopeful one at that, of the refusal of the creative imagination to succumb to the dour pronouncements of positive reason. Ironically, in this the most demoralizing of times, when economic crisis and hostile political pressures threaten intellectual work as a whole, there occurs now a regeneration, almost a rebirth, of critical reason. It is as if the forced reduction of life to the particular, to the grim necessities of economy, stimulates the intellectual imagination to break once and for all with positive discourse, and to come over to the side of culture, of the artistic and theoretical imagination. Certainly, at no point in the history of the Journal have we received such a large volume of exceptional manuscripts or experienced such a close sense of intellectual fraternity with the community of readers which has formed around the review. If the character of an intellectual review is demonstrated by the readership which it attracts, then we are fortunate in having subscribers who demand integrity of theoretical critique and who insist on critical appreciation for contending perspectives. The active support of readers is welcomed by the editors and, in fact, the knowledge that the Journal has crystallized a working alliance among theoreticians, poets, artists, historians and others makes the task of editing the review a creative one. As a journal which encourages the announcement of critical tensions among opposing viewpoints, it may well be that the sheer existence of the review serves as a pressure-point against the bad conscience of the bourgeois personality.

The editorial of the very first issue of the Journal noted that the review was intended to defend the intellectual imagination, against not only the threatening force of public life but as well against the demoralizing indifference of the surrounding population. I think now, in modesty, that the Journal has held true to this project, serving faithfully and well as a refuge for the creative imagination and for serious and critical scholarly work. In addition to a series of critical and, in some instances, now classic articles in theoretical domains stretching from cultural analysis to dependency theory, the Journal has published a provocative number of theme issues. Beginning with such thematisations as "Emancipatory Theory" and "Marx and Marxism Reconsidered" and continuing with "Psychoanalysis, Ideology and Language", "Hollywood, Hollywood", in "Marginality and Mexican Thought", the Journal has both addressed central theoretical debates and typically helped create the trajectory of these debates. It is gratifying that

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many of the articles published in the review have attracted serious and prolonged commentaries, only some of which have been able to be included in the exchange section. It is equally a mark of the Journal's impact that, at this point, many manuscripts first published in the Journal, are now appearing in book form. As a number of reviewers of the Journal have pointed out, we have succeeded somehow, and this against the specializing tendencies of the public order, in creating a discourse which is thoroughly interdisciplinary, including participants from economics, sociology, literary studies, history, political science, law, and, of course, recently from the artistic and cultural communities.

It is not, in fact, an unhappy occasion when a discourse long forgotten in history's twilight returns, in all of its force, in all of its vitality, to describe the contemporary intellectual predicament. I have in mind a wonderful concept deployed in the nineteenth century by John Watson, perhaps Canada's foremost exponent of critical idealism. Watson characterized the best of intellectual discourse as that of the "warring subject" — a protracted, creative struggle in thought between the actual and the possible, between the moral ideal and historical practicalities. Now, generations later, the discourse of the warring subject returns, however falteringly, in the trajectory traced out by contributions to this Journal. This special issue oscillates, for example, between political economy and the cultural imagination. That the theoretical discourse contained here joins together serious reflection on Habermas, Van Gogh, Magritte and Keynes; that, in fact, the issue contains theoretical analyses ranging from hermeneutical critique to structuralist accounts of cultural experience, is illustrative of a sustained attempt at articulating the dynamic, the warring, tensions at the heart of intellectual life.

If there has been a feature common to the often contending perspectives presented in the Journal, it has been the attempt to reconcile the universal claims of the intellectual imagination with the particular demands of Canadian, and, perhaps, North American history. On this, the fifth anniversary issue of the Journal, I sometimes have the temerity to consider that the intellectual fate of the Journal, its success in reconciling culture and history, imagination and necessity, mirrors the agony and possibility of Canadian intellectuality itself. This is, after all, a society which for all of its colonisation of economy and for all of its mimesis in politics, still is unique in producing a succession of philosophies of civilization which expose, in truth, the full dimensions of positive discourse.

The next five years of the Journal begin with a major change of venue. Beginning this summer, the editorial and business offices of the Journal will be relocated to Concordia University in Montréal, Québec. The Journal was in a very real sense, made possible by its inception and development in the unique cultural setting of Winnipeg. The Journal's location in Winnipeg always

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militated against the adoption of a metropolitan attitude, and, indeed, created in the Journal's very texture an implicit understanding of the importance of regional discourse in Canada. The move to Montreal is really part of the same discursive logic, situating the Journal between the two épistèmes which are at the heart of national debate. In a modest way, we are hopeful that the Journal will provide a forum for an active appreciation of the complex and, indeed, advanced intellectual and cultural life of Québec.

In addition to the Journal's impending shift to Montréal, a number of more thematic analyses of crucial theoretical issues are now being developed. Over the next year we expect to publish thematic presentations, appraising, for example, the historical imagination, on the emerging debate between Sartre's and Foucault's perspective, and the crises of culture and society. Readers will be invited to submit contributions to the various issues and, in the best of worlds, general "readers' meetings" will be held in various locales to discuss, among editors, readers, and contributors, the themes being worked out in the Journal. Of course, the mainstay of the review will continue to be the presentation in each issue of a variety of original and serious theoretical *oeuvres*.

Ultimately, of course, the intellectual success of any review is based in good measure on the work of the editorial board and on the degree of rigour and responsibility which manuscript readers bring to the task of evaluating submissions. This Journal has been fortunate in attracting editors from a variety of academic disciplines who have made quite unique contributions to the theoretical development of the review. And, of course, manuscript readers can expect to be rewarded for consistently exceptional reviews by being called on for further work, all in the interest of engendering the intellectual life. I would like to thank, in particular, Allen Mills and Alkis Kontos who were associated with the Journal's early development, and who now are returning to other academic work. Their past contributions to the review are appreciated.

Arthur Kroker

HABERMAS'S RETREAT FROM HERMENEUTICS[1]
SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND THE CRISIS OF LEGITIMATION

Dieter Misgeld

A. Introduction

Theories endeavouring to articulate what a society is and why and how people are organized in social forms cannot merely proceed, as if the very questions raised by them had never been articulated in the society itself. Societal members enjoy and deplore the associations they have with others. They regard them as impositions, fearsome encumbrances and threats, or as provocative and stimulating possibilities to further their projects.

"What the society is" as a multiplicity of associations between humans is constantly dealt with in such terms. The question is dealt with in other ways as well: planners in government, industry or the universities may speak of and "analyse" possibilities for development, risks of crisis, the failure and promise of social intervention. Depending on where one is located in these various kinds of discourses, one will find one or the other way to address society plausible. Among them the sense of being free to articulate what the society is stands out as an interesting sense: for it echoes the belief present in many societies that a society, i.e., an arrangement of living with others, is not worth much if it does not at least give everyone the right, in principle, to speak about what the society is by addressing modes of association with others as desirable or undesirable, oppressive or supportive. Discourses in which the society is addressed in these ways are thoroughly practical. "Society" is the topic to which we express our approval or disapproval. This sense is one of the elementary meanings of living socially, of inhabiting a world held in common. Interpretations which originate in and play back into practical orientation as the way in which human affairs become social provide these senses; they always display a recognition of the kind of social membership at issue, be it familial, personal, or public.

Questions as to what the society is are mostly posed in the framework of everyday life, and the cultural traditions present both in it and through it. They are the subject matter, in one way or another, of our conversations and deliberations. These conversations do not seem to proceed as if we could ever raise the issue as to "what the society is" as a purely theoretical issue. How society works, what it is, are questions which arise most forcefully on those occasions when we want to determine the kind of life the society provides for us or we can claim from and in it. Here the issue of articulation, one's right to

question the society and what it is with respect to what one wants and needs, arises most forcefully.

Consider the case of the women's movement.[2] Its questions to the society do not arise from considering "what the society is" as a topic of theoretical discourse. There was no concern, especially in the initial phase of the movement, with determining the features of social rules and conventions, as if they were permanent objects (how society has often proceeded since Durkheim). The concern was and is with questions about the society by inquiring into what and who it allows or prevents from being. There are definite experiences which give rise to the questions: the experience of domestic confinement, being left out from public discourse, of economic dependency, etc. An analysis seeking practical answers of how the society is accounted for in and by these practically motivated questions would be a *hermeneutics of the social life-world*, relying on the sense or lack of sense the society has for its members. It would seek out the strongest questions put to the society as the most revealing ones. Rather than *describing* the social life-world the inquirer pursuing hermeneutic lines would want to appear as a partner in discourse about these questions. He or she could only do so by revealing his or her own preoccupations to the society and putting them to a test in relation to all those views, which are not the ones he or she finds naturally acceptable. Here argument and critique would begin. Questions as to what the society is, what methods to employ in its academic and intellectual study, would be grounded in the recognition that one has already taken a position when faced with particular claims, even if one cannot derive them from or regard them as sanctioned in general by a set of norms elaborated in explicit argumentational discourse. But the discourse and argument have also been surpassed by events, activities, further discourse. All this is to say, with Gadamer, that unavoidably "being" reaches beyond consciousness.[3] To put it differently: explicit argument, distinguishing for example, between "the subjectivity of opinion, on the one hand" and the "utterances and norms that appear with a claim to generality,"[4] while often needed, cannot be the basis of life lived in common. One would become confused, lose one's grip on every day events, were one to orient to this idea of argument for agreement on what needs doing and may be done as the only means for establishing a life together. While the women's movement has in fact made problematical much that once passed as normal in the relation between men and women, it also attempts to establish once again ways in which women can take something for granted about themselves. Even the study of women's situation in the past does not merely sever the interest of emancipating women from this past for the sake of identities as yet to be shaped. It also requires the assimilation and productive continuation of this past.[5] All this is to show how questions addressed to the society are first and foremost practical. This is especially the case if these questions arise from within social movements.

I realize, of course, that I may be sidestepping the relationship between theory and practice as the issue for emancipatory social movements at least since the time of Marx. And undeniably the Marxist tradition has been deeply conerned to show that the practice of the struggle for emancipation it recommended is rational. I cannot properly address this issue in this paper. What I say will be in preparation for a fuller treatment.

I have chosen to discuss some aspects of Habermas's social theory, because in it the relation between theory and practice is posed as the problem of the relation between theoretical and practical discourse and as a problem of the relation of two modes of social organization: social integration and systems integration. This approach is represented in Habermas's work from *Legitimation Crisis* to the essays in *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. It is foreshadowed in the introduction to *Theory and Practice*. I address all three texts. Addressing the recent work of Habermas in these terms is also important because there are tasks for inquiry which follow from it. Society ("what the society is"), for him, is addressed in systems-theoretical concepts as well as in terms of a life-world perspective. In fact, the argument of *"Legitimation Crisis"* is intended to bring both together. My argument is that the life-world perspective is never fully developed. Habermas's theory puts the society together as taking a course of development which suggests the possibility (for a theorist) of practically and politically consequential discourses in accordance with its level of development. There is never any serious attempt to find out what the society is to those who already question it. In one sense, everyone questions. In another sense, the society is most practically in question for those who find it difficult to live in it. Not everyone is included here. Social theory should address those groups in society who are in this position and have already begun to articulate their situation. This position would be the one taken by politically and existentially radicalized hermeneutics. It would *express* the estrangement from traditional culture for which Habermas argues theoretically when he inquires into how rational contemporary society is (and is not). This radicalized hermeneutics would also express the impossibility of inhabiting traditional culture as confidently as Gadamer's hermeneutics recommends. But it would share the latter's sense that no culture worth speaking about can be thought of as *grounded* in the explicit weighing of arguments and in only one process of deliberation (a discourse of a theoretical kind debating "claims"). If estrangement from traditional culture is not *lived,* it cannot merely be produced by the cognitively pure form of argument Habermas singles out.

I mentioned earlier that "planners" speak of the society with reference to development, social intervention and the like. We may now add, they also understand it as a system. This understanding leads into an important additional consideration. The social sciences often appear to be sciences of

planning. The systems-theory of society Habermas discusses critically and which he incorporates in *Legitimation Crisis* in particular, oftens reads as if written for purposes of social planning. In fact, it endorses this perspective as its own. Gains in rationality in the society have their "feedback" on the theory which describes these gains. The theory becomes their instrument and mouthpiece. This concept makes Luhmann's work so distinctive.[6] In this paper I am implicitly raising the issue of whether countering systems theory by incorporating it is the right way to proceed. Such incorportion is what Habermas does. His theory may have suffered for embracing it too strongly. While systems theory may describe something like the logic of rational administration in "advanced" capitalist society, Habermas may have developed a different logic, not of use to and for rational administrations, but for theoreticians who analyse the relation between those systems and the life-world. This logic leaves out of the picture those who want and must begin with the world of daily life as the place in which "what the society is" arises as an issue. As thoroughly administered as this "world" may be, it is *in it,* that one can see what *being* administered comes to. This involvement creates a different perspective from that analysed in terms of models and idealizations. Explicating communication in "the life-world" by reference to models and idealizations is not an explication of the lives lived in that world nor of the ways in which those lives are expressed. Could no power of resistance be found in them, however?

Rather than instructing us on how to identify these powers by pointing to the possibility that social norms can be called in question in terms of an ideal and hypothetical model (as Habermas does, cf. the discussion of "the advocacy model of critical theory" in this paper and the discussion of stimulation), we could choose examples of resistance as it occurs. We would have to begin with what is lived and practised — no matter if it can already be justified universally. We would have to begin with lives as lived as already raising a claim. Whoever cannot respond, for example, to women's perception of exclusion and dependence as matters detrimental to them, will not learn to respond very deeply by acknowledging that women's interests are generalizable, despite their having thus far been suppressed. One would neither understand *what* women wish to articulate as their interest nor their need for articulation. Examining whether their interests are justified because they are generalizable, would do violence to women's own view that their interests must be recognized because they are theirs first. Feminism would not have got off the ground had it not defied universalizing procedures in the first place in order to get a hearing for itself.[7] This example points to the significance of articulation as a phenomenon in its own right, over against the rational appraisal of what *is* already articulated. Hermeneutics understands this. Since the early Heidegger hermeneutics has focussed on what it means to

bring matters to speech. It has acknowledged that bringing to speech means adopting a view of the world or, in other words, a practical position. In this sense, we may say that Gadamer may be vindicated over Habermas, without having to endorse Gadamer's traditionalism.

Indirectly, the working out of radical hermeneutics is at issue in this paper. For the most part, however, I shall address some of Habermas's work in the form of an immanent analysis and critique. I will begin with the attempts of McCarthy and Bernstein to protect Habermas's programme against the argument that there is no longer room in it for "hermeneutics" or "pre-theoretical fore-knowledge of the society."

B. Social Integration, Systems Integration and Rational Reconstruction

T. McCarthy and R. Bernstein, two recent commentators on Habermas's sustained effort to reconcile a *Sinnverstehen* approach with the reconstruction of the basic elements of social systems, have argued that in spite of the increasing emphasis in Habermas's work on the reconstruction of developmental processes, individual and social, he still manages to retain a hermeneutic orientation.

Thomas McCarthy has attempted to make the case in the following way: Habermas attempts to do justice to 'subjectivistic' approaches in social inquiry by arguing:

> If and in so far as the pre-theoretical knowledge of members is constitutive for the social life context, basic categories and research techniques must be chosen in such a way that a reconstruction of this fore-knowledge is possible.[8]

"Objectivistic" approaches that attempt to neutralize this fore-knowledge as prescientific, culture-bound, and often misleading are plausible as well on Habermas's own grounds.[9] "If and in so far as the pre-theoretical knowledge of members expresses illusions concerning a social reality that can be grasped only counter-intuitively, these basic concepts and research techniques must be chosen in such a way that the fore-knowledge rooted in the interests of the life-world remains harmless."[10]

A fundamental motive for developing a general theory of communication (as a theory of socialisation based on the delineation of universal competences such as cognitive, communicative and interactive competences) therefore arises out of the need to overcome the "particularistic, situation-bound character of traditional hermeneutics,"[11] which is not in a position, for

Habermas, to furnish the concepts and techniques needed for the neutralisation and/or criticism of prejudices, illusions, and ideologies implicit in the pre-theoretical knowledge of societal members. For the hermeneutical interpreter is affected by these as long as he accounts for his own activities of interpretation as situation-bound, since he shares the fundamentally practical nature of the pre-theoretical knowledge of societal members.[12]

If one follows McCarthy in this characterisation of hermeneutics, a general theory of communication would provide theoretical grounding for the hermeneutic interpreter who remains situation-bound. It would do so by fixing "the underlying universal-pragmatic structures"[13] both 'horizontally' and 'vertically' i.e., in terms of a formal conceptual characterisation of cognitive, linguistic, and interactive competence, and in terms of the developmental logic of world-views.

For developments in both dimensions exhibit "rationally reconstructible patterns": they are said to be analysable as "directional learning processes that work through discursively redeemable validity claims. The development of productive forces and the alteration of normative structures follow, respectively, logics of growing theoretical and practical insight."[14]

Richard Bernstein as well has recently argued that "understanding human action with reference to the meaning that action has for agents" is compatible with a programme for social and political theory, which also attempts to "exhibit regularities and correlations" of social and political practices.[15] An explanation of these regularities is needed in order to determine "whether these are systematic distortions or ideological mystifications in the agent's understanding of what they are doing. We must investigate the causes of these distortions and mystifications."[16] Thus, even allowing for various kinds of qualifications applying to a causal-analytic or empirical approach in the study of the relation between the self-understanding of agents and what underlies, produces, and/or distorts this self-understanding, Bernstein, McCarthy, and, most of all, Habermas, emphatically assert the need for the construction of a theory of society which sets out to discover "rationally reconstructible patterns" as much in what agents say and do as what makes the saying and doing possible. In effect, among his works published to date, Habermas has taken a resolute step toward this position. The work, *Legitimation Crisis,* contains an argument "to the effect that the basic contradiction of contemporary capitalism issues in crisis tendencies that can be empirically ascertained."[17] In the more recent essays "Historical Materialism and the Development of Normative Structures" as well as "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism,"[18] Habermas attempts to lay the foundations for such theorems by examining various approaches toward a theory of the social and historical development of the human species in terms of a theory of "universals of societal development" or "highly abstract principles of social

organization."[19] He says: "By principles of organization I understand innovations that become possible through developmental-logically reconstructible stages of learning, and which institutionalize new levels of societal learning."[20] In accordance with the research strategy proposed by Habermas, which requires the integration of findings from a historically oriented social anthropology[21] and analyses of the origin of the state,[22] social integration is reconceptualized in terms of changes in its forms, such as the replacement of kinship systems with the state.[23] Habermas here returns to an initial distinction between practical knowledge and technical or instrumental (as well as strategic) knowledge[24] in claiming that only reference to "knowledge of a moral-practical sort"[25] can explain the change of one form of social integration to another.

Yet "knowledge of a moral-practical sort" is in turn to be analysed in terms of the abstract organisational principles of the society mentioned earlier, among which "developmental-logical recontructions of action competences" belong.[26] Individuals acquire their competences by growing into the symbolic structures of their life-worlds, a process of development which passes through levels of communication (three of which Habermas distinguishes). These formulations resume the discussion in *Legitimation Crisis* in which the concept of organizational principles of societies had been introduced and already connected with the conception of a developmental logic, taking up the comparison of an ontogenetic theory of development (e.g., Piaget and Kohlberg) with a theory of the logic of social development on the level of systems-structures (systems-integration).[27] In "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism," however, problems of systems integration are no longer merely analysed in terms of threats to and capacities of societal steering mechanisms, such as the interlocking functions of state (a democratically, even if marginally, legitimated form of government) and public administration but in terms of a reformulation of the Marxian concept of modes of production.[28] Marxian analysis is defended against various rival theories and described as superior to the neo-evolutionism inherent in a theory of social systems which regards the increase in internal complexity of social systems, the corresponding reduction of external complexity, and the interaction of both as criteria sufficient for the appraisal of social progress[29] (e.g., in modernization theories).[30] Critical discussions focus, of course, on the teleological conception of history inherent in historical materialism. Not just the reconstruction but even the *rehabilitation* of historical materialism is possible for Habermas, if one considers that "Marx judged social development not by increases in complexity but by the stage of the development of productive forces and by the maturity of the forms of social intercourse."[31] From here Habermas proceeds to reformulate the stages of development of productive forces as "progress of learning ability" in the

dimension of objectivating knowledge, to be kept distinct from progress in moral-practical insight. Apparently, Habermas joins his earlier position regarding the distinction between the objectivating methods of natural science and the development of moral and practical consciousness integral to the hermeneutical sciences[32] with the distinction between social integration and systems integration.

But neither "The Development of Normative Structures" and "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" nor *Legitimation Crisis* take up the full set of intriguing as well as puzzling arguments contained in the introduction to *Theory and Practice,*[33] which cannot be avoided by any student of Habermas's work who is interested in the complex interaction of the various components of his theory. These arguments are of particular importance because here, under the title "Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Praxis," Habermas introduces the central problem of all of his substantive as well as methodologically oriented writings: how can a theory of society and of politics, which endorses and subscribes to stringent criteria for theory formation, be practically enlightening as well, especially if it is an essential requirement of processes of enlightenment, that they be so practically accomplished that in the end there be no superiority of those possessing theoretical knowledge over those who do not — "In a process of enlightenment there can only be participants?"[34]

In this paper I claim that the application of stringent criteria for theory formation in some systematic way is *not compatible* with the requirement for theories to be practically enlightening. In fact, I shall argue implicitly, in accordance with the hermeneutical position adopted, that theories of society, if understood in the rigorous sense of being correctives (prior to their application) to the ordinary (or extraordinary) practical knowledge members of the society have usually acquired of that society's affairs, cannot, in principle, be practically enlightening. It follows that the asymmetry between those pursuing the 'enlightening' and those to be enlightened (the practically oriented members of the society) can never be removed, in spite of Habermas's claim that it only requires self-correlation. These questions will be raised with respect to the introduction to *Theory and Practice* in conjunction with an analysis of some of the arguments contained in *Legitimation Crisis.*

Primarily I select issues surrounding the introduction of the concepts of systems integration and social integration from the latter work. The discussion is largely oriented toward raising questions concerning the employment of these concepts and the stringency they may possess as well as the distorting effect they may have in the context of a theory which intends to be practically enlightening — to make reference to Habermas's avowed *intention.*

Implicitly an answer will be given to the questions raised by Habermas (and

McCarthy) about the validity of a hermeneutical position in social theory. I will attempt to give this answer in political terms rather than just methodological ones. This attempt will also clearly point to concerns which are not significantly present in the texts most representative of hermeneutics.

I argue that a radical hermeneutical position is closer to a notion of praxis than Habermas's recommendations for the reconstruction of the pre-theoretical knowledge of societal members. For, in my conception, critical reflection will be placed within the context of social situations for which we interpretively account while attempting to transform them. Action orienting knowledge is made radically dependent upon situationally generated knowledge, such that any general knowledge of the society, be it of rationally reconstructible patterns of underlying patterns or a procedure for assessing the validity of social norms in general, comes to no more than practically generated fore-knowledge ("pre-understanding," to use Gadamer's phrase) when one is faced with the exigencies of situations which make determinate claims on practical orientation. To put the case differently: when one acts practically, any theoretical foreknowledge will be appraised in terms of criteria which apply to 'any' knowledge (e.g., the knowledge of situations generated practically in previous situations of action) once it enters into the context of practical orientation. It is like the case of the interpreter of cultural documents: his understanding of cultural documents in general amounts to little when he is overwhelmed by the significance of what a particular document tells him, such that the very nature of what a cultural document *is*, is revealed to him anew. Similarly, a general knowledge of the society, gained by suspending "the compulsion to act" (Habermas) will not remain what it was when the necessity to act prevails once again, when once again actors cannot but recognize themselves as beings hopelessly yet, also, characteristically bound by the circumstances of their lives which, in practical situations, seem to be all that matters.

Theories attempting to explain these practical circumstances in terms of what is happening behind our backs, in terms of what underlies our competent performance of whatever reasoning we do when we are required to reason, or in terms of theories of ideal norms of discourse, looked at from the radicalized hermemeutical perspective which I propose, become merely an additional element in what matters, practically speaking.[35] They do not bring 'what matters practically' and what these concerns are before our view for comprehensive and detailed inspection, before we have even begun to act and as if beginning to act could be postponed till we possess the comprehensive view.

Richard Bernstein, at the end of his *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*, states programmatically that "an adequate social and political theory must be empirical, interpretative and critical."[36] We hope to

know, according to Bernstein, how clear action-orienting understandings can emerge, which are based on the secure knowledge of a) what conditions our actions, b) how we interpretively generate self-understanding, and c) how we can employ both practically in order to transcend the present conditions of our lives and the understandings in terms of which we explicate them. Knowing all this would amount to having a comprehensive view. But pursuing it entails the neglect of all that which we already know about what we do and how we do it, a knowledge which is regularly and persistently part of our actions. The knowledge Habermas and Bernstein wish to gain is to free us from illusions. But this freedom could occur only at the cost of losing sight of the action orienting understandings we already possess and which are subject to constant re-evaluation in the course of encountering circumstances which require corrections to our self-understandings in the light of changing conditions. A theory which does not make these practical understandings thematic right from the start will no longer be able to encompass them once that theory is deemed complete enough to be applied to these understandings. A theory which is to possess action orienting force must locate itself in modes of explication in which the need or "compulsion" to act is recognized from the start. It would not be a theory which is only to be applied once it has brought everything before its view which might be thought of as needed, on *theoretical* grounds alone, for theory to have an action orienting force. A theory of society intended to be practically enlightening must locate itself in processes of the practical explication of social situations which themselves already point toward enlightenment as a practical task. A theory interested in the removal of distortions, illusions and misconceptions, must place itself within the context in which they arise and recognize their force in order to be able to cope with them in some practical way. There cannot be a general knowledge of distortions and the like which is intended to be practically effective but which does not expose itself to the *practical* force of illusions, distortions and misconceptions.

Bernstein's recommendations can lead to no more than the expression of the hope that, in the end, we must be able to solve, once and for all, the riddle of how social life is organized. Hermeneutics argues, however, that we are subject to self-deception when we believe that we can separate the knowledge we hope to attain of our practical affairs from the need to prove that knowledge in how we take up our practical affairs. It recognized the priority of practice — and seeks a characterization of knowledge in which knowledge is understood, from the beginning, as the knowledge one has of one's historical situation. The latter arises from the conduct of life itself.

Thomas McCarthy, the second reviewer of Habermas's position considered in the first part of this paper, also endorses Habermas's belief that hermeneutical intuitions are respected, when a theory critical of society

(Habermas's critical theory) combines strictly theoretical elements with a reflection on interpretive processes of social life. He claims:

> that a theory of communicative competence, while introducing theoretical elements into the interpretive process and thus mitigating its radically situational character, does not entail replacing the hermeneutical orientation of the partner in dialogue with a purely theoretical or observational attitude.[37]

There is to be no monopoly on truth on the side of the critical theorist. There remains the interest, the need, the obligation (which of these?), possibly the theoretic requirement for the sake of the completeness of the theory "to come to an understanding with others."

In making this claim, McCarthy ignores the fact that the action orienting force of critical theory, qua *theory*, cannot be assessed by its addressees, *unless* they assess it on its own grounds, in terms of *its* criteria of validity. The theory, however, claims to have anticipated the criteria in terms of which it could become available to societal members who themselves are not engaged in the enterprise of developing a theory. It has, in short, anticipated the need for the continuous discursive examination of action orienting norms as what *all* societal members should be able to orient to *as an outcome* of the theory. However, if one was serious about the radical situational character of *any* understanding of our social situation which we might achieve, one would have to recognise the possibility of *failing* to achieve it as well. A theory could not compensate for or render avoidable such a failure by "introducing theoretical elements into the interpretive process." There is, then, no theoretical guarantee possible for the need to engage in the continuous discursive examination of action orienting norms. The validity, indeed, even the sense of the idea would have to be shown in practical ways to be itself practical.

In what follows, I shall attempt to show how some of Habermas's theorising seems to consist of a systematic avoidance of the radically situation-dependent nature of social inquiry. It is part of the analysis that Habermas characteristically invites the reaffirmation of a hermeneutical position precisely because his own theorising makes it visible as the location toward which all his efforts of systematic theorising are orientated. The reaffirmation of a hermeneutical position, which Habermas both illuminates and occludes, will therefore attempt to come to terms with the political intent implicit in his successive efforts to redesign critical theory. I have indicated in the introduction how hermeneutical reflection can become political. This politicization would be a significant departure from the sense given it so far by, for example, Gadamer and Ricoeur.

C. The Objectivating Use of Reflexive Theories

I shall begin with the introduction to *Theory and Practice*.[38] Here, Habermas addresses the peculiar status of reflexive theories of society. These are theories "designed for enlightenment," where claim to truth is to be tested on various levels. One of those levels is that of scientific discourse, the other is that of successful processes of enlightenment "which lead to the acceptance by those concerned, free of any compulsion, of the theoretically desirable interpretations."[39] Those concerned are all those potentially involved (in terms of what the theory addresses as relevant issues). The objectivating use of such theories, which mean to initiate processes of self-reflection (Hegelian model) is such that the critique of ideology (temporarily) assumes someone to be incapable of dialogue and, thus, a superiority of insight is claimed on the part of those doing ideology-critical work.

Habermas says of this superiority that it requires self-correction because those critical of ideology, observing that others are bound by 'particular' interests, must ultimately put their own critique to the test of universal validation in discourse. This discourse is to be held among all of those whom one can assume should be participants ("all participants")[40] in terms of its own universal norms.

Ultimately, in other words, a critique of ideology is only valid when those who are believed to be subject to ideological delusion themselves agree that they are. For example, in the case of those who are not sufficiently class-conscious, somebody else must speak on their behalf and must, furthermore, speak to them so that they become enlightened as to what they are. Thus, the claim to truth of reflexive theories can only tentatively be confirmed.

We must interpret this view of the limits to claims to truth formulated in reflexive theories (or in theories intending enlightenment, intending the development of a rational identity in the course of becoming conscious of something formerly repressed) as a variation of Habermas's central themes:

1) That a liberated society is one in which there is communication free from domination (i.e., in which social consensus is achieved in an utterly uncoercive manner).

2) That under present conditions this ideal is not a utopian one because its pursuit is the only alternative to a technocratic mode of social control.

3) That it is an ideal the possibility of which all of us have learned to understand implicitly once we have mastered a natural language.

4) That it is also an ideal which we can understand better when we notice that in the course of the evolution of world views toward the discursive validation of social norms there are only two possible directions of development:

    a) the acknowledgement of the idea that the extension of

> communication processes beyond all barriers is the only possibility for an uncoercive consensus about social norms; and of the idea that, if there is to be rational consensus in the future, this is the only way of getting it.
>
> or b) the reorientation of all past modes of socialization which have relied on the internalisation of norms and the acquisition of reflective potential, so that these processes can be dispensed with and 'consciousness,' reflective awareness, would atrophy.[41]

Much of what Habermas says about the objectivating use of reflexive theories is of immediate importance only for the first and third points, communication free from domination as a social ideal. For this freedom requires that the theorist formulating the social ideal be aware that his own conceptualisation is the conceptualisation of something non-theoreticians cannot only understand, but also something they have implicitly mastered themselves. This understanding would ultimately require that (a) they themselves can show (not *be* shown) that they themselves, as non-critical-theorists, share it; or, if that is not possible, that (b) the theoretician must be able to show that they could master it once ideological obstacles were removed.

Thus a theory intending enlightenment must avoid a new class division — that between the theorist and those theorised about. From the point of view of critical theory the members of both groups are all members of society, and ultimately equal participants in discourses. Habermas, I believe, has only addressed the matter in terms of (b). In other words, he has acknowledged the right of all societal members to be judges of his theory (the theory of an ideal situation of discourse as a social ideal) such that societal members are regarded as capable of recognising the ideal if they free themselves from ideological deceptions. However, he never permits doubts about the basic principle of a theory intending universal emancipation, the principle that enlightenment must be self-accomplished by all those who can take an interest in it. Therefore, he has not really reflected on the following issue: can those of whom it is said that they have implicitly mastered the notion of an ideal situation of discourse, of communication free from domination, ever become critics of the theory? They ought to be able to do so, for it would seem that the principle explicated by the theory should be applicable to itself and should indicate the method of its generation. But if this point is so, then an ideal situation of discourse is itself recognised in an ideal speech situation, validated in such discourse. Given, however, that many members of society have not overtly subscribed to it or cannot be assumed to have done so, as long as they have not participated in the validation process of the theory itself, what point is there suggesting that it is true, that from it critical theory can take its beginning? Critical theory, appropriately self-critical, could never go beyond its beginning without a reification of its notion of truth.

What critical theory can do, before the members of society can be judges of its validity, and what it can only do tentatively, prior to their explicit agreement that what it says is true, is this:

a) Critical theory can abstractly anticipate the content of enlightenment and emancipation, or at least one aspect of it; namely, the requirement that emancipation is only achieved when there is freedom from domination in the sense of unrestricted discourse.

b) Critical theory can indicate which groups in society are the ones whose social position must first be altered, such that they can expand their ability to render problematic those social norms which keep them in a state wherein they have to accept them in a more or less unquestioning way.

Thus the only criterion in addition to the traditional ones which Habermas has taken as his focus, i.e., the indication of the existence of a class-structured society — is the one which points out that there is unequal access to social power by showing the existence of varying capacities to make social norms problematic. Capacity would vary between those who see no need for making social norms problematic but who assume their general capacity to do so, the "ruling class," and those who as the victims of class rule, cannot question norms because they lack the ability.

All these formulations are formulations ensuing from the objectivating use of a reflexive theory. Thus, what I am saying, in a sense, is that Habermas's stringent restrictions upon the objectivating use of reflexive theories apply to his own theory's formulations of such restrictions. If Habermas says that praxis engaging in the strategic action of class strugle is bound to lack theoretical justification, either by reifying a reflexive theory of emancipation or by ignoring questions of justifications, then these restrictions apply to his own theory, only from the opposite point of view. His theory takes the risk of being self-validating and thus suppresses any internal dependence of its own validity upon praxis. It is not so different from the psychoanalyst's theory which, even for Habermas, remains intact in terms of its most general features no matter how little or how much a patient (client) participates in the process of its validation. The only aspect of the theory open to correction, by either acceptance or rejection by the patient, are the conjectures which are interpretations derived from the theory presented by the analyst. But the theory itself is not in question.

Thus, the formulations about class structure to which I alluded above are made when critical theory places itself in a position analogous to that of the psychoanalyst (role-identity with social critic). The latter anticipates patterns of self-development in their typical constellations of conflict and of conflict resolution from the point of view of a general theory of early childhood socialisation processes. As for the analyst in Habermas's accounts, these anticipations are tentative, however strongly evidenced inductively, until the

patient accepts and makes his or her own the interpretive suggestions made by the analyst.

Thus, the elaboration of the genesis and logic of world views and the impossibility of not-learning[42] as considered in *Legitimation Crisis* and "The Reconstruction of Historical Material"[43] are anticipatory formulations on a general theoretical level whose truth ultimately depends upon the consent of those about whom they are formulated. That is, their truth depends upon members' recognition of themselves in the projection of an evolutionary history which they are willing to acknowledge as their own.

I interpret Habermas's distinction between social integration and systems integration in *Legitimation Crisis* as a further variation upon this theme, first made fully thematic in *Knowledge and Human Interest*.[44] I also view it as Habermas's arduous and belaboured effort to arrive at a clarification of the relation of theory and praxis — a relation which, on the one hand, is to avoid the consequences of an instrumental use of Marxian theory; and, on the other hand, is to retain the capability of theorizing so as to give a comprehensive theory of a society as Marx intended it, while also addressing a specific historical situation and actors in it who can make the theory their own in order to direct their action.

My view is that this theoretical program contains *incompatible elements and that something will have to give*. If the theory remains comprehensive, then a situation-specific understanding of a liberating praxis will disappear from its purview. The theory would, therefore, invite instrumental use and lose its self-reflective, critical character; if, instead, the theory recognises the priority of practice, then it must give up any claim to the possibility of enlightening that practice by bringing before it a complete set of objective conditions, the knowledge of which could then orient practice in the most definite way. In other words, I deny that Habermas can fit the non-objectivating, hermeneutical intentions of the theory, which bring it closer to practice than its other elements, into one framework with the objectivating elements aiming at a theory of social evolution.

I shall attempt to provide some illustrations for these critical considerations by briefly examining Habermas's distinction between social and systems integration in *Legitimation Crisis* and what he says about the advocacy role of critical theory.

But before I do so, I want to look at a further aspect of Habermas's theory program, as formulated in the introduction to *Theory and Practice*. It is the distinction between self-reflection and rational reconstructions.[45] "Self-reflection leads to insights due to the fact that what previously has been unconscious (the ideological determinants of action) is made conscious in a manner rich in practical consequences. Analytic insights intervene in life."[46] "Reconstructions deal with anonymous rule systems, which any subjects can

comply with, insofar as they have acquired the corresponding competence with regard to themselves. Reconstructions thus do not encompass subjectivity, the experience of reflection."[47] "They only contribute to the theoretical development of self-reflection, which has a merely indirect relation to the emancipatory interest of knowledge."[48] *Legitimation Crisis,* I claim, is a book which only contributes to this latter task. In doing so, it is not at all a politics in the search of the political,[49] nor does it achieve a re-politicisation of the relations of production as Schroyer claims.[50] For it only shows that perhaps the relations of production can again be politicized, and, that there are propitious circumstances for it. More the book cannot say, since everything else is a matter of doing, which also involves speaking (but rhetorical and discursive speech in situations of conflict in particular, i.e., the performative use of language). It cannot be a politics in search of the political until it has found an anchorage point for its politics such as may be found in protest and withdrawal potentials among adolescent youths.[51] Yet this anchoring point in praxis is only pointed to from the outside and is, thus, discovered in an objectivating use of the theory. Thus, again, Habermas does not speak from the point of view of a situated praxis of liberation.

Habermas in *Legitimation Crisis* only contributes to the politics of theorizing, making us conscious of theories as ideological, and of reviewing, and designing crisis theorems. In making crises thematic, critical theory tries to show that there is still the objective possibility of crises. It does not prove that there is or will be a crisis. It is important to note, against anyone for whom it is necessary to point to this possibility, a crisis of capitalism. (In its theoretical formulation this possibility would also theoretically justify the applicability of the term 'capitalist' to advanced industrial societies). The possibility of crisis is only actually pointed out to a systems theory denying this possibility. Habermas does so by turning systems theoretical concepts toward topics which systems theory attempts to discredit. For systems theory generates a terminology which allows it to treat society as a whole (as a subject, as an organism, a self-regulating system) — crisis-states of which can always be compensated for with adaptive mechanisms. Critical theory attempts to defeat it on its own grounds. It shows how there are limits to these adaptive capacities of systems integration, and where crisis will emerge from the point of view of an analysis making systems integration thematic. Yet crisis, even the crisis of a society in its totality, cannot be articulated merely from this perspective. It is also to be made thematic in terms of social integration. How does this integration become possible? Habermas makes these claims in *Legitimation Crisis.* Appealing to the pre-scientific use of the concept 'crisis,' he says: in ordinary usage "the crisis cannot be separated from the viewpoint of the one undergoing it," and further "Only when members of a society experience structural alterations as critical for continued existence and feel

their social identity threatened can we speak of crisis."[52] Thus the concept of social integration can only be made thematic by reference to members' knowledge of it. Yet in his 'official' introduction of the concept (suggesting how it would be employed in theoretical context), Habermas glosses over a full explication of the notion of social integration by reference to members' pre-theoretical mastery of it. He says:

> We speak of social integration in relation to the systems
> of institutions in which speaking and acting subjects are
> socially related. Social systems are seen here as life worlds
> which are symbolically structured. What becomes
> thematic here, are 'normative structures both as values
> and institutions of society.'[53]

Events then are to be analyzed in terms of "dependency on functions of social integration" while "the non-normative components of the system serve as limiting conditions."[54] Habermas claims that here he is pursuing a life-world perspective. Yet the claim is not so. For nowhere does Habermas introduce as a systematic basis of theorizing the way in which crises of social integration are articulated by non-theoreticians. Yet his own perspective requires that their own articulation be decisive for a statement about the existence of a crisis. Nowhere does he show how subjects in speaking and acting relate themselves to one another in such a way that there can be institutions which relate subjects socially.[55] This weakness is so because Habermas at once focusses on a feature of our speaking (not even our acting) which we do not ordinarily recognize or know about — the fact that social reality consists in recognized, often counter-factual, validity claims.[56] The crucial issue here is what recognition would amount to and why it has to be stated as a feature of social reality. I take it that such recognition must be so stated because it is not unequivocally recognized.

What is the problem?

1. Habermas makes social integration thematic as if one could only speak about crises when there are social members who refer to it as the state they are in — when they say they experience it or indicate they do, such that we can interpret them as saying it. This position could be interpreted as a suggestion to limit the theorist's, any social theorist's, claims to what he can know about crises to the same knowledge about crises which is already possessed by those about whom he theorizes.

2. But given Habermas's qualifications, this is not possible. For (a) he actually makes social integration and its breakdown in the form of crises only thematic in terms of institutional systems, "in which speaking and acting subjects are

socially related."[57] He does not analyse how those organized in institutions actually make them 'things' to be organized into. In this sense, Habermas actually misses the life world perspective. Furthermore, (b) he discusses the normative structures as if, apparently, they can be analysed by the theoretician without reference to how they are held to be valid by those orienting themselves in terms of them. Habermas uses functionalist terms: normative structures function as maintaining social consensus and individual and social identity. Again, the theoretician speaks, drawing upon a vocabulary and mode of analysis which is not grounded in the life-historical experience and articulation of individuals and groups who are faced with a crisis in terms of their own interpretive accounts of it.[58]

3. Thus, Habermas can speedily proceed to look for further and loftier tasks of integration. Here it becomes the task of integrating social integration and systems-integration in order to reconcile the never explicated but merely mentioned life-world perspective with a system perspective, referring to the steering performances of a self-regulated system — this being the other possible formulation of society as an object of theoretical inspection. The possibility of a systems-theoretical and functional-structural analysis of systems structures, sub-systems, control centers, etc., I shall leave aside. It is obvious that, in articulating it by following and adjusting Luhmann's work to his purposes, Habermas does not propose the articulation of a life-world perspective.

What I point to here, however, is the fact that he has made a proper articulation of the life-world perspective almost impossible. He has formulated the issue of the life-world in such a way that nothing but the task of systems integration and social integration and the integration of both in one theory can result.

My review of and my critical comments about Habermas's formulation of social integration as an issue for critical theory beside and in addition to a concern with systems-integration was meant to demonstrate two things:

1. The theoretical articulation of crisis which claims that it itself is dependent upon the articulation of a crisis situation by those undergoing it points to the very close connection between social experience and theoretical reflection at which critical theory must aim. It is another illustration of a point made throughout. Habermas articulates theoretical reflection as work which has merely conjectural claims to truth until those about whom the claims are made consent that what the theory says is true. They both must play the same language game. Yet *it cannot be the language of theory which they both share.*

Habermas's theoretical articulation of crisis also shows that an articulation of systems integration requires an articulation of problems of social integration. What would be entailed by it and should be said about it? I shall come to this question shortly.

2. Habermas has distorted the intentions of his theory. In *Legitimation Crisis* he has analysed social integration as an aspect of systems integration or as a sub-system (in the language of systems-theory) of the controlling social system imperatives. Social integration turns out to be the 'functional' task of the socio-cultural system. It supplies motivations and legitimacy of certain kinds. Thus it becomes more difficult to see critical theory as a reflexive theory, a theory which aims at the experience of reflection as an experience of the suspension and abolition of reification. This difficulty arises because social integration problems are subordinated to a formulation of systems imperatives as organizational principles of the society, which can only themselves be formulated in their abstract character by abstracting from the way in which they are interpretively generated in situations of interaction.

Witness Habermas's latest suggestions[59] that Marx's account of social evolution must be supplemented by analysing the origin of capitalist organisation not only in terms of mode of production structures defined predominantly in categories of the human relation to nature in work, but also in terms of kinship-orders and the evolution of discourse as a systems-learning mechanism. Here the category of interaction, equally original and fundamental as that of labour for him, is presented in its reified version. Habermas does not reflect on his own theory as a mode of interaction with societal actors where both are either subject to and involved in a shared practical context of communal life from the beginning, or trapped in antagonistic structures of experience.

What results is that Habermas actually reformulates critical theory as a whole. It becomes a theory of social evolution, analysing the change of societies over the course of history in terms of the transformation of the organizational principles of these societies (a shorthand or formula-like formulation for complex historical states of affairs). In other words, critical theory as a theory of systems and social integration is a reconstructionist theory. In finding organizational principles it finds anonymous rule systems. And, in Habermas's words, it contributes only indirectly to emancipation. For it contributes only to the theoretical development of self-reflection, not to the formulation of the interdependence of action and reflection in situations of action where we conduct ourselves as doers and speakers, such that both represent our will to bring about something. At this point, critical theory is an objectivating theory, not a reflexive one.

But a definite criticism must be held in abeyance until we have examined Habermas's proposal for critical theory, now no longer interpreting it as a systems theory but as a reflexive theory. This matter is at issue when we analyse the advocacy role of critical theory and the model of the suppression of the interests capable of generalization.

D. The Advocacy Role of Critical Theory

The advocacy role of critical theory consists, Habermas says, in

> ascertaining generalizable, though nevertheless sup-
> pressed interests in a representatively simulated
> discourse between groups that are differentiated from one
> another by articulated, or at least virtual opposition of
> interests.[60]

Such a simulated discourse can only have hypothetical results (*vide* my
preceding discussion), since political actors, "having to account with their life
histories for new interpretations of social needs"[61] are the ones whose
confirmation of the results of the above-mentioned discourse is decisive.

Yet, critical theory in assuming its advocacy role does not anticipate the
outcome of the discourse. For built into it is the model of the suppression of
the generalizable interests. It is guided by the question:

> How would the members of a social system, at a given
> stage in the development of productive forms, have
> collectively and bindingly interpreted their needs (and
> which norms would they have accepted as justified) if they
> could and would have decided on organization of social
> intercourse through discursive will-formation, with
> adequate knowledge of the limiting conditions and
> functional imperatives of their society?

The crucial phrase in this passage, and the one determining the validity of the
"advocacy model" is this: "How *would* the members" have interpreted their
needs "if they *could* and *would* have decided . . ." through discursive will-
formation. This phrase definitely implies that, so far, they have not
formulated their will in this fashion.

Critical theory will do it for them according to the advocacy model. It will
do so:

1) by articulating interests which are opposed (sense unspecified),
2) by simulating the discourse representatively (this phrase remains
unexplained, but it must mean that everyone's demands can be articulated),
3) by providing adequate knowledge of limiting conditions,
4) by finding suppressed interest and
5) by identifying these suppressed interests as generalizable.

Note that, according to the premise, the interest suppressed is an interest in universal discursive validation of social norms. For, so far, members of social systems have not and may not even have wanted to decide about the organization of social intercourse discursively.

The advocacy role of critical theory is carried out in terms of this premise. It will be retroactively validated, should interests be found which can be generalized and which are suppressed. Yet, since this effort itself has never been made, except in a clearly limited way, the interest which is generalizable and has been suppressed is an interest in the very discourse which will determine, contingent upon its tentative completion, generalizable yet suppressed interests.

In other words, the conclusion states what the premise states — it is not a conclusion. It can simply be stated in the form: "There are generalizable, yet suppressed interests." One can know that these exist because reflection on this principle is not always possible at all times in society. Thus, since this principle itself is suppressed, there are generalizable, yet suppressed interests. This of course, very much sounds like a circular argument, unless we can interpret the terms "not always possible" in a way which would warrant the introduction of the term "suppressed". This term must be defined by reference to what can/ought to be generalized, but is not.

The circularity of reasoning consists in the following: that the principle of a discursive validation of all social norms is suppressed can be seen, according to Habermas, when we note that it cannot be applied whenever and wherever we think it is necessary. Ideally, it should always be possible with respect to all social norms to render them problematic. Yet why should or ought it be possible? This possibility requires the invocation of an ideal situation of discourse as a norm.[62] Therefore, the very principle which is suppressed must also be recognized and thus found not to be suppressed. What is suppressed makes the recognition of suppression possible. This reasoning is not a vicious circle for Habermas, because peculiar to an ideal situation of speech is that it hints at a form of life which, as yet, escapes our conceptual grasp in most respects. Such speech does not escape to the extent that the formal features of language, even though they are dialogue constitutive universals), show the possibility of concealing the principle in their actual use.

What is it that we need in order to fill in what Habermas has left unexplained or undefined? It is knowledge of the concrete empirical and historical conditions under which social norms will usually be determined. This point is not the same as saying that I take the theory of generalizable interests to be valid and am merely looking for a possibility of application. I am saying that its validity itself and *a fortiori* the validity of its outcomes (which Habermas says are hypothetical) are dependent upon an interpretation of such terms as not always possible (as in the phrase: "reflection on this as a

principle is not always possible at all times in society"). For what could they mean? They could mean — "not possible" because there is use of political force or psychological repression, etc. But they could also mean — there are time constraints which obtain as long as human beings exist as temporal beings or as organisms; or which exist as long as people have other interests than an interest in discourse, as they are bound to have.

But, perhaps one could argue that these objections are all pedantic, since Habermas is only formulating a social ideal. Two things will be said in reply to this objection:

1) What does Habermas mean by a social ideal? He means something which is very similar to the practical organization of enlightenment as a political act, although it is less than political action of the kind which even he deems possible — an experimentation with the limits of late capitalism. The advocacy role of critical theory is, in other words, its mode of being political. Yet it has not come around to speaking politically. For there is so much more to know . . .

2) Habermas's argument could perhaps be remedied if we introduce the concept of a (social) "norm" rather than "interest." Thus we would not speak of generalizable interests, but of generalizable norms. But how would that make sense? For norms, if not universal, are something general like principles. And the interest in the universalization of discourse is itself an interest in a principle. Where would it come from? It would arise in a reflection upon principles, itself subject to the rules in which the interest in the generalization of interests would take an interest, on the basis of a discourse completed or nearly complete. Thus, this argument does not help either. In other words, Habermas's argument treats the model of suppressed yet generalizable interests as one which can be theoretically constructed; as if there were no social groups who already have articulated demands for recognition of their interests and of which they can rightly believe must be recognized at least as morally justifiable. For it is clear, let us say, to the poor or to the disadvantaged, that others, better off, do not want to be in their position.[63]

Thus Habermas's principle is useless unless he addresses concrete demands and shows, in concrete cases, that the principle does in fact apply. But then it would have to be formulated differently. Rather than stating that there are interests which cannot be generalized, the principle would have to say that there are some interests which deserve more recognition than other interests. In the case referred to in the previous paragraph, the principle would have to consider the factual circumstance that the being better off of those better off does not, in fact, increase the welfare of those less well off. Thus Habermas makes the error of addressing a principle in its most abstract form. He does not engage in moral, practical, or political discourse, or even critique. He construes a rule for an ideal society and argues on their own level of

abstraction against theories which refuse to recognize such a rule.

Thus, what is said here is that discourse takes an interest in discourse. The interest rational agents can have, once they recognize an ideal situation of discourse as a norm, is only an interest in the continuation of that situation. Our problem here is that Habermas has formulated a norm which is not applicable to action as such. We can never judge the principle in terms of its consequences for action.

I have already argued that critical theory cannot simply be a reconstructionist theory reconstructing anonymous rule systems. Yet *in the consideration of the advocacy role of critical theory, the model is outlined in terms of the criteria developed for the reconstruction of anonymous rules.* Instead of inspecting cases where social norms are rendered problematic by demands for participation in the determination of those social norms, Habermas invents an abstract formula applicable to all such demands but not reflecting any one of them in particular.

Again, Habermas is trapped in an objectivist form of reflection, the very thing against which he argues, when he argues against strategic action on the basis of a reflexive theory. He does protect himself sufficiently against an objectivist use of his theory in strategic action, I believe. But he does not prevent or, rather, he provokes an objectivist understanding of his theory. Such an understanding can hardly be avoided because Habermas does not provide one instance of actual reflecting on a particular social norm. This objection applies although Habermas does in fact speak of instances where presently operative norms may crumble, e.g., when he refers to a possible breakdown of performance — or achievement — ideology,[64] or when he points to the relation between political-administrative planning and demands for participation.

But all these matters, as well as the issue of a class structure which is kept latent, are approached indirectly, objectivistically — in order to indicate crisis zones, not to justify these demands or breakdowns morally or morally-politically. Thus Habermas does not provide an ethical or a practical-political argument against class structure. This omission is damaging in his case, because his theory creates the expectation of such an argument. Rather, he reformulates some classical Marxist arguments. He refines one or the other criterion for the existence of class and takes classical criteria for granted. But he does not give a critique of class society, although he sounds as if he does. He would be better off, I believe, were he to argue in terms of principles, of an ethical kind on the one hand, or in terms of an historical analysis of crisis tendencies on the other. At the moment, his work is ambiguous and the introduction of the idea of linguistic ethics or communication ethics[65] confuses matters further. The idea gives the illusion of a hermeneutical approach where there is none. For such an approach would require that one

reflect in terms of historically contingent situations which set the context for reflection, while in the context itself these conditions are not objectivistically available.

Habermas hints that this is what is to be done when he says (a) that the model of suppressed generalizable interests shows the functional necessity of ideology and the logical possibility only of its critique,[66] and when he states (b) the injustice of the repression of generalizable interests can be recognized in the categories of the interpretive system obtaining at the time.[67] But he fails to see that a critique of ideologies cannot be made plausible by showing its logical possibility. Such an attempt presupposes what it is to show, that an interest in universal discourse is suppressed.

E. The Problematic Character of Social and Political Theorising in *Legitimation Crisis*

I am therefore challenging the view that arguments for a critique of ideologies can be developed in a theory of crisis (of late capitalism). For the issue is not to show either the historical/political or the logical possibility of this critique, but its moral justifiability and its pragmatic viability. Both are missed when one approaches critique in terms of a crisis analysis although each on different grounds and in different ways. The various aspects of a defense of a critique of ideologies which Habermas attempts to combine cannot be brought together without one element of the justification and/or analysis (historical-political) losing out. This loss becomes, perhaps, even clearer when we look at Habermas's comments about Marx in *Legitimation Crisis* and related writings.

Let us assume that something like the proletariat exists and omit all the difficulties involved in "demonstrating" its existence. For Habermas, identification with the oppressed class's will to free itself is based on "pre-theoretical experiences, that is, on 'partisanship,'[68] unless we have arrived at that commitment on the basis of the reflection discussed so far.

Yet Habermas does not view Marx's commitment to the industrial working class as having come about in just that way, as we notice when we follow his formulations in *Legitimation Crisis*. He says:

> In his ingenious examination of the twofold character of commodities, Marx has constructed the relation of exchange and in it the steering mechanism of the market as a reflexive relationship.[69]

In doing so, Habermas has not only attempted to explain how the economic

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process of capitalism works, but having analysed its steering mechanisms; he has also attempted to account for class antagonism as a divided ethical totality, i.e., the society as a divided community. The division is to be explicated in terms of the development and/or disruption of moral practical consciousness.

Speaking in terms of a strategy of research — the labour theory of value for example — permits the depiction of problems of systems integration on the level of social integration. Structures of intersubjectivity, interaction contexts, and the formation of collective and individual identities are reached through the analysis of systems-structures. In *Legitimation Crisis*, Habermas says of Marx: "Propositions following from a theory of contradictory capital accumulation can be transformed into action theoretic assumptions of the theory of classes."[70] Marx permits the possibility of retranslating economic processes etc., into social processes among classes. Therefore Marx's theory can be seen as both a theory of the system crisis of capitalism and as a theory formulated from the life-world perspective, as the articulation of class antagonism in terms of the experienced victimisation of the proletariat and in terms of its initial steps towards a politics of emancipation. Thus, while the theory is objective on the systems-level, it becomes partisan and committed to a practical/political point-of-view made out by the theory as the necessary one, when systems-level descriptions are retranslated into propositions asserted by a critique of ideologies. Moreover, the latter claims the competence of reflective penetration of systems-level descriptions by describing the functioning processes not as natural events but as events which are maintained by beliefs which are ideological. For systems-level descriptions describe something as having "the objectivity of natural events" which actually can be altered by practical reflection.

Apart from Habermas's observations about the limits of Marx's proposed program of systems analysis and practically committed reflective and emancipatory critique, there is a noticeable gap in his account. That gap can be shown in the following questions:
1. Where does the system-level description originate? In the practical experience of the victimized group itself? This explanation is not plausible. For the proletariat seems to be in need of an analytical, comprehensive and scientific theory. 2. Does a systems-level description lead to a practical commitment of its own accord? This possibility is doubtful. For then the retranslation alluded to above would not be necessary. 3. In terms of what considerations is the retranslation required and how does the commitment of the theory to the imputed point of view of the proletariat come about?

This latter would be a crucial question. For here the difference between a blatantly instrumentalist conception and a 'humanist' one would emerge. The

blatantly instrumentalist one would be as follows. A systems-analysis shows that there will be crisis. One must identify with those who will emerge as the dominant force. But why, like Marx and Habermas, must one do so, given that one may never witness the arrival of the crisis?

At this point, a theory searching for practical commitment would coincide with the humanist conception of the necessity of identification with the proletariat. It would have to be based on a moral obligation, formulated as an unconventional ethical code and supported by a tentative, yet never fully elaborated, theory of history as well as by prudential considerations. It would always have to take the following form: given that exploitation is inhuman and that it has varying forms and given that circumstances X to Y exist, what ought we do and what can we do, when we do not merely act in terms of self-interest? The 'we' are the theoreticians — 'we,' Marx, Habermas *et al.*, — not the proletariat, for whom ethical imperatives, necessities of survival, and/or desire for self-respect happen to coincide, to be collapsible under certain conditions into one urge.

Habermas confuses the issue once more. He sees Marx as a systems-theoretician and a theorist of class action who reformulates systems-categories into categories of social interaction or social integration. But he fails to mention in his account of Marx and in his own account of late capitalism that action-theoretic categories include moral principles or, at least, a vision of a different life, the concrete content of which would vary with cricumstances. It can only be formulated by reference to the experiences of those who have no such way of life available but who know in some respects that others do. Habermas never analyses social integration or communicative interaction (as distinct from strategic action) in terms of the formulation of moral and political claims in pragmatic contexts of action. In doing so one could see that practical reasoning or discourse contains elements of moral justification as well as of strategic-pragmatic calculation. One sets limits to the other. Furthermore, the notion of an ideal situation of discourse is probably superfluous. This ideal is too ambitious to solve practical dilemmas and too pale to give a powerful, action-motivating image of utopian fulfillment. It is practically impotent. Should we wish to make use of it, we would have to introduce some concrete social norm such as the denial of certain satisfactions or of participation rights. Habermas's ideal seems to ignore the situated and occasioned nature of human activity and talk. It leaves us where we are.

Here one best returns to some of Habermas's earlier problems, such as the distinction between practical questions and technical ones. From here, one could work one's way up once more and leave systems-theory aside. For the explication of communication in everday life is still wanting. As yet, we do not have a theory, or anything like it, which could represent for us how questions of justification arise in the context of daily deliberation and action, questions

concerning the justification of claims about the best life that people might live. Yet a theory, or at least an outline of it, is needed to represent to us perspicuous examples of the kind of reasoning involved in the discussion of such claims in daily deliberation and examples of the effects the intrusion of technical and expert knowledge has had on these processes of deliberation.[71] Once these initial steps have been taken, we may be in a position to diagnose whether, indeed (as Habermas firmly believes), the public discussion of social and political questions has atrophied, and to discern the criteria in terms of which it could be determined that this has occurred. We would know that practical interventions to counteract 'depoliticization' can be initiated for good *practical* reasons. A revitalisation of the 'public sphere' would not necessarily amount to a scientisation of politics or of public opinion either. It could instead be the rehabilitation of a practical reasoning which is situation-bound and context-specific, over against the technocratic universalism of expert opinion.

It is doubtful that systems theory has eliminated potential for this practical reasoning. It is equally doubtful that the realities of political life even remotely resemble the projections of a system-theory which sees itself as the steering and control centre of the rationalization of public administration in advanced industrial societies. For, after all, there is already great distrust of the bureaucratic invasion of the private sphere.

F. The Question of Organization and the Objectivating Use of Reflexive (Critical) Theories

In reviewing Lukács's "Toward a Methodology for the Problem of Organization," Habermas addresses the relationship between theory and organizational issues, which Lukács had once formulated. Lukács states that for pure theory diverse interpretations can "assume the form merely of discussions" where differences in the interpretation of theory live side by side. He then says, for Marxists, "every theoretical direction . . . must immediately be transformed into an organizational issue, if it is not to remain mere theory." Habermas interprets Lukács to mean this: "Theoretical deviations are therefore to be immediately subjected to sanctions on the organizational level."[72] Habermas wants to say that the truth of theories must be testable independently of whether they are useful or whether certain discourses are preparatory for action. He states that Lukács does not recognize the autonomy of theoretical reflection. Therefore, Lukács can speak of the Party as acting representatively for the masses without merely depending on their spontaneity.

Yet I am not so certain that Lukács could not be interpreted differently. He

seems to propose that in Marxist theory one can only determine the validity of theoretical propositions by interpreting them in terms of their potential for the organization of the class struggle. What Habermas objects to is the view that the very necessity of the class struggle — the validity of this concept, and the descriptive account of a society as being a class society — are then removed from the sphere of discursive and other types of examination. The theory will be instrumentally used. The theoretician and party strategist become one and the same. Self-critical reflection upon the principles and theoretical accounts which have been believed to warrant commitment to class struggle in the first place becomes impossible.

Yet such a view is only one possible interpretation of Lukács's claim that Marxists must interpret theoretical questions as organisational issues. For it is quite conceivable that the claim to the unity of theory and praxis requires that every theoretical question be seen also as an organisational one. The meaning of 'organisation' would then be the practical, experimental testing of the theory by trying to enact claims for the need of emancipation. Here the claim to validity of the theory can only be established if it proves itself in practice, that is, if it permits the interpretation of situations practically encountered as susceptible to an interventionist practice of some kind.

Habermas comes to his negative conclusions about Lukács, because he seems to adopt the following schema for his interpretation of Marxism:
1. Marxism is a general theory of society, formulated as a theory of social systems and their evolutionary history.
2. The theory is guided by practical intentions directing its attention to *loci* of possible emancipatory struggle.
3. These locations of possible struggle can be made out in advance on a systems level discourse by the theory.
4. Once this has been done, a practice can be initiated.
But, in my view, this account of how a commitment to emancipation comes about is erroneous. This account results (1) from a preoccupation with correcting Marxist theory, with making it respectable as a theory, and (2) an overreaction to voluntarist practice aiming at the "overthrow of the system."

In other words, Habermas expresses doubts that there can ever be simultaneously a theory sufficiently comprehensive and detailed to warrant the inference for praxis that "the system can be overthrown," or even to warrant the prediction of what specific system-transforming effects particular types of practice can have. He also refuses to sanction "revolutionary practice" as Lukács endorses it, because, for Habermas, in his analysis of late capitalism, one cannot be certain at all of the justifiability of its interventionist intentions until one has a sufficiently comprehensive and detailed theory. How could we interpret Lukács's suggestions so that something less menacing results than what Habermas finds in it, and also, than what was made of it in

the history of Soviet Marxism?

I would suggest that one begin with a reflection upon the origins of a practical commitment to emancipation and emancipatory struggle. These origins can only be found in practical experiences which then are interpreted in terms of practical norms entailing a claim to universality. In other words, instead of beginning with a theory of the universal norms implicitly recognised by speakers of natural languages, one could begin with situations in which the effort to develop a discourse about some taken-for-granted norm is frustrated. Or one begins with situations in which norms and actions deviate one from the other (or are interpreted as deviating) as this becomes visible to someone or to a group reflecting on their relation. We have a particularly strong case for this reflection when these someones or this group are in fact told that the actions in question are appropriately sanctioned by the norms. In all these cases, it cannot be denied that any effort to either problematize norms or their relation to actions might be construed as implicitly appealing to something like an ideal situation of discourse.

But, there is no reason for a theory which intends emancipation practically, and thus, in some sense, also organizationally to require the *explicit* statement of an ideal situation of discourse as a norm. Women, for example, as I discussed in the introduction, argue that in the past and even now they have been excluded from most important kinds of discourse regarding social norms. This exclusion has been so effective because in the past it was believed that women did not have to be considered by themselves or because it was taken for granted that they were included in men's discourse, that men could speak for them. Dorothy Smith says about the issue as it arises in sociology: "Sociologies of sex roles, of gender relations, of women, constitute women as the object of inquiry. *It never quite makes sense to do a sociology of men*, nor is it clear how that would differ from the sociology we do."[73]

It is clear enough that Smith could appeal to something like an ideal situation of discourse as a norm, but does not need to do so for her purposes. She prefers not to. Why? Something like an ideal situation (of discourse) is not appealed to as a norm by Smith and many other theorists analyzing phenomena of the suppression of participation in cultural and intellectual discourse because, in their view, *it would not reveal anything* one could not already see operative in the analysis of the suppression of participation and in the critique of it.

For women to articulate their experience of being excluded, furthermore, is not the same as articulating their *right* to participation, as liberal theory and, implicitly, Habermas would have it. It is, rather, to formulate how they need, for *their own sake*, the articulation of *their* experience, *their* understanding. The whole point of this kind of emancipatory analysis could be lost were it to refer itself right at the start to a universal ideal. For an emancipatory and

critical analysis such as Smith's is *not a theory* preceding the practical organization of enlightenment or emancipation. *It is already a kind of practical reflection,* because it *achieves the expression* of what previously could not be expressed (women's sense of being excluded).

Theory and practice of emancipation are one in this case, at least in so far as women's critique of academic disciplines, or of the organization of knowledge in the professions, requires their bringing *themselves* to expression, requires their claiming and making visible an identity they have not been able, so far, to publicly bring into play.

The analogy to Habermas's construction consists only in this: something is brought to expression which previously was not. The theorem of an ideal situation of discourse warrants the bringing to expression of issues and social positions previously unarticulated — but it only does so abstractly: the ideal situation of discourse could mean, in practical terms, that whatever has not found expression in the past may be or must be expressed, if all the participants in the discourse (ideally all of humanity) agree that it should be expressed in the course of a discourse which can be carried out without restrictions (of time, of place?).

Now we see clearly that Habermas's ideal can never do justice to the local and particular character of the experience of exclusion nor to what one claims as one's own in breaking out from it. He entirely misses the *lived* form of oppression, dependence, and exclusion. We must ask, in the end, if there possibly is a lived sense of the crisis of capitalism and how we could reflect on it. Here I have, as yet, no suggestions to offer, except to say that the approach taken by Smith or that taken by the Brazilian revolutionary educator, Friere, who proceeds similarly in Third World situations, promises more.

We may, however, have to choose between a *general* theory of class society and the articulation of the *lived* and *practically constructed* sense of class dependence and class oppression. Habermas is so fascinating, because he attempts to unite both positions in his theory. But it is also due to this attempt at unification that his theory is extremely hypothetical and sterile. Habermas separates theory and practice too emphatically. Habermas is so insistent about the need for adequate *theory* as the way to bring an interest in social emancipation to expression, that he does not see that questions of emancipation (distorted communication, etc.) become as a consequence *only* a matter of theory.

Once more, one may have good reasons for preferring a more practically oriented analysis, even at the price of not having a fully validated theory. Otherwise there is only interminable theorizing about emancipation and distorted communication, but no understanding of what both might be as practically interpreted matters. The appropriate place to begin this practical reflection can only be experiences of exclusion or of the failure of articulation

(of one's experience, one's interests, needs). One should not fear charges of relativism or particularism when these points are chosen as the places to begin a critical analysis of the historical situation of "late capitalism."

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Notes

1. Sections of this paper were first presented to a session of the Radical Caucus of the American Philosophical Association at the APA meetings, New York 1975. I would like to thank Kai Nielsen and Trent Schroyer for comments made in the session. I decided not to publish the earlier version, because I had seen unpublished sections of Habermas's essays now published under the title *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (1979). I also discussed the role of hermeneutics in Habermas's theory with Thomas McCarthy in Starnberg in Summer 1976 while he was writing his book on Habermas and with Juergen Habermas himself. My feeling was that these recent publications are even more strongly subject to the criticisms made in this essay, and that to begin with *Legitimation Crisis* is advisable with respect to the recent development of Habermas's theory.

   I wish to acknowledge valuable help from two of my students, Peter Grahame and Robin Holloway, O.I.S.E. Thanks are due as well to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for having supported my work with a Sabbatical Leave Fellowship during 1979.

2. The texts which have taught me most about the women's movement are Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution,* New York: Bantam Books, 1977; Dorothy E. Smith, "A Sociology for Women," in J.A. Sherman and E. Torton Bede (Eds.), *The Prison of Sex: Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge,* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1979, pp. 135-187; and, of course, Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics,* Garden City: Doubleday Inc., 1970.

3. Gadamer's strongest formulation of the issue is the following: "History does not belong to us, but we to it. Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society and state in which we live. The focus of subjectivity is a distorting mirror." *Truth and Method,* New York: Seaburg Press, 1975, p. 245. Remarks like this have provoked Habermas's resistance. Cf. D. Misgeld's analysis of the difference in "Critical Theory and Hermeneutics," in J. O'Neill (Ed.), *On Critical Theory,* New York: Seaburg Press, 1975; also, D. Misgeld, "Discourse and Conversation," in *Cultural Hermeneutics* 4 (1977), pp. 321-44; and D. Misgeld, "Science, Hermeneutics, and the Utopian Content of the Liberal Democratic Tradition," in *New German Critique* (Spring 1981), in press.

4. J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis,* Boston: Beacon Press, 1975, p. 10.

5. Rich, *op. cit.* and others argue that midwifery as a practical art was more helpful and definitely less harmful to women than the expertise of gynecologists. Thus past practices offer a possibility for the critique of present ones.

6. Cf. N. Luhmann, *Soziologische Aufklaerung,* Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1971. To appear in translation this year by Columbia U. Press. Cf. also J. Habermas and N. Luhmann, *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozial technologie,* Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971.

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7. Cf. D. Smith, "A Sociology for Women." Her argument is built on the difference between universalist procedures of inquiry in sociology, which have been naturally open to men, and women's place outside this frame. Women's lives, the place to begin a sociology for them, have hitherto been bound up in the local and particular, i.e., in the needs for the body as they are present in and for domestic labour and care.

8. J. Habermas, quoted by T. McCarthy in *The Critical Theory of Juergen Habermas*, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1978, p. 354.

9. *Ibid*, p. 354.

10. *Ibid*, p. 355.

11. *Ibid*, p. 355.

12. This view is implicit in H.G. Gadamer's position in *Truth and Method*. It is addressed, I believe, in the recommendation that every interpretation of what a text (a philosophical text or a work of literature in particular) says requires the application of what it says to the interpreter's own situation (pp. 289 and 341). Understanding what a text says is only achieved by the interpreter when he has accomplished this application. It is achieved in particular when he lets his own situation come into question. This is not to say that his situation can be accounted for in particularistic terms. Habermas and McCarthy overlook, I believe, that for Gadamer, one's situation comes into question when one discovers its dependency, and one's own, on traditions in the interpretation of life preceding it and passing beyond it.

C. Taylor has explicated the logic of the hermeneutical procedure of interpretation in terms of the notion that there can only be readings of an institution of a set of cultural practices which can be corrected by further readings. He argues, as Gadamer would, that there is no definite vantage point from which the final correctness of a reading could be established. A 'brute data' approach could achieve this by establishing a commonly agreed base line for inquiry, but only by reducing the subject matters contested in inquiry to a format, which eliminates the very topics giving rise to conflict in interpretation. In Dallmayr and McCarthy (Eds.), *Understanding and Social Inquiry*, London: Notre Dame University Press, 1977.

13. McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 355.

14. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 16; McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 354.

15. R. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978, p. 230.

16. *Ibid*, p. 231.

17. McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 358.

18. In J. Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1979.

19. *Ibid*, pp. 152-3.

20. *Ibid*, p.153.

21. M. Godelier, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology* (1976).

22. Habermas, *Communication*, p. 158.

23. *Ibid*, p. 146.

24. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1971, pp. 301-17.

25. Habermas, *Communication*, p. 146.

26. *Ibid*, p. 154.

27. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 87; and *Communication*, pp. 95-130.

28. The relation between the political and administrative 'subsystems' of societies is centrally thematic in the work of Niklas Luhmann, a German sociologist with a strong systems-theoretical orientation. It is a point stressed by Luhmann in his adaptation and expansion of the framework of Structural Functionalism developed by T. Parsons. For Luhmann's basic categories see *Zweckbegriff und Systemrationalitaet,* Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1968; for his relation to Functionalism, see *Soziologische Aufklaerung* (1971), pp. 9-53. See also the important debate between Luhmann and Habermas in J. Habermas and N. Luhmann, *Theorie der Gesellschaft* (1971).

29. My formulation is a very schematic characterization of the position adopted by Luhmann in all his systems-theoretical analyses. While he attaches a number of qualifications to the use of the concept 'complexity,' the following is a passage illustrative of his procedure: One finds in the problem of structural complexity "the foundations for a theory of evolution. By means of the formulation of systems the complexity of the world is increased, or the number of structured possibilities. This is how chances arise for the development of evolutionary achievements, which are tailored toward the mastery of a higher degree of environmental complexity which at the same time however, increase the complexity of the world . . . " (1971, p. 261, my translation). While Luhmann does not argue that social progress is inevitable, i.e., without risks, he does claim a progression from a social system based on the 'functional primacy' of an ethical-political order to one in which the economic subsystem predominates, and from here to one in which the subsystem of 'science' will assume a guiding role. Luhmann argues as well, however, that an increase of functional specification in 'social systems' leads to more risks internal to them, i.e., the possibility that their own development becomes more problematic.

30. Habermas, *Communication*, p. 141.

31. *Ibid*, p. 142.

32. Habermas, *Knowledge*, pp. 301-17.

33. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1973.

34. *Ibid*, p. 40.

35. The position suggested here has much in common with the ethnomethodological analysis of the relation between general sociological research policies, general procedures recommended for a variety of purposes, and the actual use and application of them in particular settings. It is argued that the application of such policies and procedures to actual circumstances inevitably transforms them into instances of practical reasoning which characterises any kind of reasoning in those settings. They can therefore not be expected to succeed in making practical reasoning facing actual exigencies of action more rational, which is what they were designed to achieve in the first place. At least this is one possible, admittedly hermeneutically influenced, account of the developments in sociology which Harold Garfinkel has inaugurated. See *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1976. Yet general policies, research procedures and the like are not insignificant, 'generally speaking' as I had said in the text, because they stand for the effort of any reasoning to acquire definite objective, i.e., enduring status.

36. Bernstein, *Restructuring*, p. 235.

37. McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, p. 357.

38. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, pp. 1-41.

39. *Ibid*, p. 37.

40. *Ibid*, p. 39.

41. This seems to be the reason for Habermas's strong opposition to Luhmann and a motive for giving one chapter of *Legitimation Crisis* the title "The End of the Individual?" (pp. 117-30).

For the systems-theoretical approach seems to recommend that individuals be introduced (undergo a learning process) to various social practices, circumstances and contexts of concerted action, without their being permitted to reflectively appraise these situations. They are only permitted to deliberate in terms of pragmatic-technical considerations, on e.g., how to diffuse tensions, how to shift a particular stressful pressure off to a set of systems-activities in a better position to cope with it, etc. (See also the highly interesting remarks on court procedure in Luhmann, 1969/75.)

42. My formulation expresses disagreement with Habermas's view that "the fundamental mechanism for social evolution in general is to be found in an automatic inability not to learn. Not *learning* but *not-learning* . . . calls for explanation" (1975, p. 15). Habermas claims that "the overpowering irrationality of the history of the species" can only become visible against this background of an increasing rationality, which however fails to reach into all dimensions of human life, moral-practical consciousness in particular. A hermeneutical position would suggest that we never really are in a position to definitely assess the rationality *or* irrationality of the history of the species because we never bring it fully into view. One might even propose that a radically hermeneutical perspective would view human life as dependent upon the recognition of *rationality in crises*, because one does not presume to judge social life from a historical vantage point, which itself escapes the contingency of reflecting historically, both in terms of its starting points and of its self-applicative results.

43. Habermas, *Communication*, pp. 130-177.

44. Habermas, *Knowledge*.

45. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, p. 12.

46. *Ibid*, p. 23.

47. *Ibid*, p. 12.

48. *Ibid*, p. 14.

49. D. Howard, "A Politics in Search of the Political," in *Theory and Society*, pp. 271-306.

50. T. Schroyer, "The Re-politicization of the Relations of Production," in *New German Critique*, No. 5 (Spring 1975), pp. 108-127.

51. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*; and R. Doebert and G. Nunner-Winkler, *Adolescenskrise und Identituetsbildung*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1975.

52. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 5.

53. *Ibid*, p. 4.

54. *Ibid*, p. 5.

55. It seems to be the aim of C. Taylor's studies on Hegel (In *Hegel*, Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1975; and *Hegel and Modern Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1979) to demonstrate the dependency of the individual search for meaning on the availability of shared meanings, which lie beyond the range of individually justifiable aims, be they stated in utilitarian terms or in terms of the pursuit of radical autonomy (Cf. in particular 1979, pp. 154-170). There is some convergence here with Gadamer's insistence that the meaning of traditions reaches beyond the reflective grasp of individuals.

56. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 5.

57. *Ibid*, p. 4.

58. Habermas says: "A society does not plunge into crisis when, and only when, its members so identify the situation"; and, "Crisis occurrences owe their objectivity to the fact that they issue from unresolved steering problems" (1975, p. 4). The issue here is, that only societal members in particular social locations can even identify a crisis as one of steering problems. Not everyone would do so. There may be a crisis, or a *new* crisis for economic planners where there

is nothing new about it for large sections of the population who interpret the 'crisis' situation as just more of the same. They then do rely on their interpretive accounts.

59. Habermas, *Communication*, Chs, 2 and 3.

60. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 177.

61. Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970, p. 75.

62. The notion of an ideal situation of discourse occurs in Habermas and Luhmann, *Theorie der Gesellschaft*, pp. 101-141. Cf. also Dreitzel, pp. 114-151. It also occurs in *Theory and Practice*, pp. 17-19. The most systematic language theoretical argument for it has been developed in Communication, pp. 1-69. I cannot discuss the details of this very elaborate construction here.

63. I am alluding to the procedures recommended by J. Rawls in his famous *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1971, which are to permit the construction of the basic institutions of a society which satisfy requirements of rationality in an approximately ideal sense. He employs the notion of a 'well-ordered society.' I am specifically thinking of the 'difference principle' that subject to certain constraints, a well ordered society requires that the expectation of the representative occupant of the least advantaged place in the distribution of income and wealth be maximized (from R.P. Wolff, *Understanding Rawls*, Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1977). The ideal procedure of reflection which Rawls recommends could easily be used, in my view, to make an already existing distribution of income and wealth appear reasonably legitimate. But this is a widely discussed issue and I shall just mention that there are interesting similarities, of a *formal* kind, between his conception and Habermas's ideal situation of discourse.

64. More details on the 'ideology' of achievement, the 'achieving society,' achievement principle and performance ideology are to be found in C. Offe, *Industry and Inequality*, London: E. Arnold, 1976. In short, what is meant, is the allocation of status and life chances on the basis of individual occupational performance as in Parsons' systems of normative orientation and pattern variables.

65. This project is characterised as follows in *Legitimation Crisis:* "only communicative ethics guarantees the generality of admissible norms and the autonomy of acting subjects solely through the discursive redeemability of the validity claims with which the norms appear" (p. 89). It is meant to bridge the gulf between the private and public domain. Habermas recognises that even such an ethics can only appeal to "fundamental norms of rational speech" (p. 120) and can therefore not provide consolation, as worldviews once could, for the "risks to individual life." And: no theory can "interpret away the facticities . . . of loneliness and guilt, sickness and death." The difficulty is, however, that the norms of speech as well as speaking itself may be so fundamentally intertwined with these contingencies, that a universalistic communicative ethics lacks any interpretive force vis-a-vis the actual communication processes in which these unavoidable contingencies are accounted for in practical ways (cf. Garfinkel, *Studies*, p. 35, on a version of practical ethics.) For even further reaching doubts than the ones mentioned above, cf. Habermas *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 121. Here the possibility of a retreat to particular identities is mentioned, as a settling down in the unplanned, nature-like system of world society. This comment does reflect what has become a frequent attitude in contemporary Western societies, which may be linked to the withdrawal with respect to the crises of adolescence.

66. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 113.

67. *Ibid*, p. 113.

68. *Ibid*, p. 117.

70. *Ibid*, p. 30.

71. Recent developments in ethnomethodological studies show more promise in this direction. Cf. J.M. Atkinson and P. Dres, *Order in Court*, London: MacMillan, 1979.

72. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, p. 35.

73. Smith, "Sociology for Women", p. 159, emphasis mine.

74. I cannot illustrate in detail what I mean by this: The central point, however, is Freire's pedagogy is that an interventionist practice sanctioned by clearly, i.e., practically identifiable instances of suffering and oppression will build up a theory of the situations in question in the course of a discourse developing between those intervening and their addressees. The addressees will themselves revise the conceptions the interventionist teachers bring to them. Details are best shown by comparing Freire's approach, hermeneutics, ethnomethodology on the one hand, with Habermas's orientation on the other.

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HABERMAS AND
THE POLITICS OF DISCOURSE*

Ronald David Schwartz

The attitude of critical theory toward tradition has been dictated by the understanding that theoretical knowledge in sociology, as distinct from ideology, must necessarily reflect the practical intention to effect social change. To anyone claiming to be radical, such an attitude appears to be beyond reproach. In one sense, it belongs to the Marxist heritage, where the critique of ideology was first elaborated as part of a larger programme of human emancipation. But the roots of this attitude also go deeper, tapping the intellectual resources of the Enlightenment, where reason was a weapon against unreasoning tradition and the institutions of the past were irredeemably discredited through a history of oppression and unjustifiable domination. Critical theory has since scrutinized the legacy of the Enlightenment and found in the ideological misrepresentation of science and technology as potent an obstacle to liberation as past tradition. Nevertheless, it has retained an abiding distrust of tradition in all of its guises. Similarly, an extensive critique of Marxism itself has identified elements of reification inherent in the Marxist vision. In this regard, the reconsolidation of state and civil society in both late capitalism and contemporary socialism, with the attendant problem of renewed politicization of the public realm, shares several features in common with traditional forms of domination. But a return to tradition has certainly never been suggested as a counter-weight to technocracy by critical theorists — as it has, for instance, by conservative critics of technological society like Ellul, Illich, and Nisbet.[1] As a political stance in the contemporary world, however, this view of tradition has several weaknesses. The destruction of traditional culture has become a rallying-point for much of the opposition to technocratic hegemony. In certain cases, tradition has come to symbolize such radical values as diversity and personal and group autonomy. Demands by groups for various kinds of cultural and political independence, minority rights, and decentralization of government, and the preservation of traditional means of livelihood have become commonplace. Such demands appeal in one way or another to tradition as a basis for community — though obviously in a highly reconstructed form. These appeals are political realities. To write off movements of this kind as merely "reactionary", as Marxism often does, is to carry the modernist critique of tradition to the point where its very rigidity belies any remaining emancipatory scope.

There are problems on the theoretical plane as well with the wholesale

rejection of tradition by critical theory. The limits to purely negative dialectics grounded in Marxism are surely apparent. Even where the Frankfurt School offered a mediated return to "bourgeois tradition," it did so in a way that precluded recognition of an emancipatory subject. On the other hand, the search for a positive basis for a theory of emancipation has led writers like Habermas into a theory of language which in turn forces a reconsideration of the whole field of social "meaning." Habermas, in particular, has expanded the theoretical base of critical theory to include the communicative dimension to society specifically as a means of countering what he sees as the positivist misunderstanding of social theory. In doing so, he has returned — albeit in a novel way — to Weber's classic distinction between "understanding" and "explanation." But Habermas has also remained true to the critical attitude toward tradition inherited from the Enlightenment — presumably as the only alternative to an uncritical relativism.

The political implications of Habermas's reformulation of critical theory are not entirely clear, particularly as they relate to the political trends I have mentioned. Does Habermas's version of critical theory allow for the same critical certainty *vis à vis* specific cultural traditions? Can the outcome of processes of emancipation in this new formulation be anticipated in a manner comparable to the old Marxist framework? Habermas does not address these questions directly. But to the extent that he has embedded his communication theory in a larger theory of social evolution and moral development, he has severely limited the organization and content of an emancipated society. Does Habermas present the only possible interpretation of a linguistically-derived critical theory? In this paper I will attempt to establish a basis for a theoretically coherent answer to this question. While I accept the major significance of Habermas's focus on "discourse," I believe that the contingent nature of some of the other elements of the theory can be demonstrated. I would like to review the theoretical foundations of Habermas's conception of critical theory with the aim of showing how his resolution of theoretical problems closes off discussion of possible alternatives. By at least demonstrating the plausibility of these alternatives, I hope to open the way to further discussion and empirical investigation.

I should emphasize that it is not my intention to defend tradition for its own sake. For a critical theory of society such a move is plainly nonsensical. Whether or not the reconstruction of tradition serves emancipatory ends is always an empirical question. Thus, it is important to ascertain the conditions under which this development occurs so that it may be anticipated and fostered. Also, an appeal to tradition is not the only basis for an emancipatory movement of the type I am considering, nor can it serve the needs of everyone. A variety of contemporary movements link diversity and liberation — environmentalism, feminism, gay liberation, local political alliances of

various kinds. A discursive model of politics is no less applicable to these movements. In every case, it is the responsibility of the activist to present his claims in a form amenable to discourse. Having done so, the extent to which obstacles to free and unconstrained communication can be attributed to the structure of society itself may then be ascertained. If, as I am suggesting here, the relationship between discursive redemption and changing social structures is truly dialectical, then it is impossible in principle to determine once and for all the meaning and scope of social emancipation.[2]

There are some puzzling — indeed, paradoxical — aspects to Habermas's theory of communicative competence.[3] By isolating a utopian component in ordinary understanding, Habermas attacks the certainty we normally uphold *vis-à-vis* social life and the world of communicated meanings. On the one hand, every normal utterance presumes communicative competence — that is, mastery of an ideal speech situation absolutely necessary for the maintenance of intersubjectivity. The ideal speech situation expresses the potential in every speech act for unconstrained dialogue. On the other hand, there is no guarantee that any actual act of communication realizes this potential. To the contrary, the likelihood is that a given utterance represents systematically distorted communication — a form of communication which preserves asymmetries in the social roles of respective participants and thus correspondingly deforms the achievement of intersubjectivity. To the extent that this is the case, the conventional model of hermeneutic understanding taken from phenomenological sociology is inapplicable, since it would apply only to a normally unrealized pure intersubjectivity. The counter-factual presumption of dialogue in fact serves only to legitimate distorted communication.

Thus, rather than being able to take hermeneutic understanding for granted, that understanding is rendered problematic and must be redeemed. For Habermas, the mode of redemption is discourse, and accessibility to discourse becomes, in the last instance, the standard by which ordinary understanding is to be judged. But for this capability of discourse to come into play, the normal constraints of action on communication must be suspended. Where ordinary communicative action is embedded in on-going social processes, which in turn provide a basis for speakers' claims to validity, discourse requires that both private motives and commonly held views be opened to examination and criticism. Once validity claims have been questioned, ordinary communication is possible again only following a successful outcome to discourse. Thus, the occasion of discourse is, for Habermas, the only means of securing the validity-claims on which ordinary understanding is based. Discourse is, then, both an empirically demonstrable event and a logical premise in the theory of communicative competence. Whether or not established norms are justifiable hinges on whether they can

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withstand discursive examination. But it is unlikely that most existing norms can withstand this sort of criticism and thus it must be concluded that their continuing efficacy requires that discussion and criticism be prohibited.

This is the basic insight underlying Habermas's concept of systematically distorted communication. Without pursuing all of the ramifications of Habermas's theory, suffice it to say that "ideology" plays a crucial role in preventing the transition from communicative action to discourse. The function of ideology is to present a fictitious resolution of problems of justification, thereby preserving asymmetries in communication and behaviour that could not otherwise withstand discourse. Habermas claims, however, that what marks ideologies as distorted communication is not their ostensible semantic content, but their capacity to block free passage into the discursive mode. The apparent symbolization of ideologies is only a subterfuge. Following Freud, Habermas argues that ideologies mobilize pre-symbolic motives (the level of paleo-symbolism) and thus systematic distortion has the character of neurosis, which is the private counterpart to what is collectively ideology.

Emancipation is likewise modelled on psychoanalysis, since "it enables simultaneous hermeneutic understanding and causal explanation in a unique manner."[4] Psychoanalytical "reconstruction leads to an understanding of the meaning of a deformed language game and simultaneously explains the origin of the deformation itself."[5] The "cure," so to speak, eliminates the influence of an ideology precisely by explaining it away. The analytic method is one of dissolution through recourse to reason. But here the question arises, what will be the result if this procedure is systematically applied in every possible case and all existing norms are simultaneously challenged? Will anything at all be left over? It is precisely because ideology has no authentic semantic value that it can be dealt with in this manner. Yet the unmasking of ideology is carried out with the intention of ultimately achieving unconstrained discourse.

This is the paradox: what can that discourse possibly be about? We have arrived finally at pure hermeneutic understanding — exactly what we set out originally to escape from. I suggest that recognition of this paradox has motivated much of Habermas's work subsequent to the theory of communicative competence. That discourse should prepare the ground for a pure hermeneutic understanding immune to criticism is untenable. Somehow a parallelism must be established between the purely formal criteria for unrestricted discourse and the semantic content of traditions. Discourse cannot *a priori* appear to favour any particular outlook, yet somehow these outlooks — or "world-views" — must be shown to conform to an inner logic. I believe that this is why Habermas has chosen to embed his theory of communicative competence and his ideas about the emancipatory significance of discourse in a larger theory of social evolution and moral development.

The problem, then, is how to guarantee the outcome of discursive processes once they have been initiated. It is unacceptable to Habermas that the outcome should be indeterminate, since this would imply that historical transformations of institutional norms need not necessarily be preparing the way for still further progress. If the possibility of historical "dead ends" is to be denied, then a theory of social evolution — or what Habermas calls a developmental logic of world-views is required.[6] In this way, a hierarchy of motives can be validated, and linked, in turn, to lower and higher forms of consciousness. The initiation of discourse at every stage can only be terminated with the transition to a higher stage (though the dangers of a lapse back into unconsciousness are not thereby necessarily lessened, as Habermas is the first to recognize).

Habermas is well aware of the Hegelian origins of this conception. The modern ego, cut loose from the naive understanding of traditional society, must try to find a new basis for a secure identity. To accomplish this, it must somehow "explain" the course of its own history. However, this explanation must proceed retrospectively from the vantage-point of newly-acquired freedom. Satisfying these conditions for a formula for the retrospective explanation of history has led to a model of social evolution that specifically identifies larger and more universal collective entities as the embodiment of a social identity through which an increasingly autonomous ego reflects on its own past. Thus, to the extent that ego-activity is bound up with universalistic structures, social identity may no longer be tied to particular communities, but requires a commensurately universal collectivity as a stage on which to act.

For Hegel, this collectivity was the state. But Habermas has himself pointed out a number of reasons why the modern state, as Hegel conceived it, can no longer be "the plane within which societies form their identity."[7] For the state may very well be a "bad state," a false assertion of unity that does not embody the "generalizable interests of the total population."[8] Even if this condition were met, "the sovereignty of the national state has in any event become an anachronism."[9] The global society that is increasingly an economic and social reality demands nothing less than a global framework for social identity. The difficulty is that this same global system is sufficiently complex that an identity conceived along lines of a universal symbolic system is highly implausible. On the other hand, Habermas specifically rejects nationalism, which in our own time is no longer linked to universalistic structures and thus, in Habermas's eyes, represents a "dangerous phenomenon of regression on the part of highly developed societies, as in fascism . . ."[10] The same criticism presumably applies to attempts at a substitute programme organized around artificial versions of a universal symbolic system as well (for instance, synthetic religions of various kinds).

These are the dimensions of the problem of finding secure grounds for a social identity under modern conditions. These grounds may exclude no one and thus must include all of mankind. But, writes Habermas,

> the whole of mankind is an abstraction; it is not just another group which on a global scale could form its identity, similarly as did tribes or states, until such time as mankind were again to coalesce into a particular entity, let us say, in defence against other populations in outer space. But what else except the whole of mankind or a world society can take the place of an all-embracing collective identity from which individualistic ego identities could be formed?[11]

The answer for Habermas requires shifting the basis for securing an identity away from identification with specific groups and instead focusing on the process of collective will-formation itself. Discourse can be shown to be a present and recognized element in a wide range of political activities. And, where discourse is present, there is full and active participation in the interpretation of needs by those concerned — as distinct from the mere authority of existing institutions, however benignly inspired. Habermas argues that an identity formed on this basis can satisfy the conditions of a global society precisely because

> such an identity no longer requires fixed contents. Those interpretations which make man's situation in today's world comprehensible are distinguished from the traditional world images not so much in that they are more limited in scope, but in that their status is open to counter-arguments and revisions at any time.[12]

Finally, Habermas has tried to establish an empirical basis for this new concept of identity by linking its development to Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral consciousness.[13] Where Kohlberg claims to have documented the ontogenetic sequence of the development of morality in the individual, Habermas describes the stages of the historical institutionalization of discourse. The increasing depth and scope of interpersonal reciprocity goes hand in hand with an increasingly more universalistic conception of morality, culminating finally in a "universal speech ethic," where discourse ultimately disconnects from particular principles and becomes itself the independent basis for the further selection and expansion of principles. For Habermas, this

represents a seventh stage beyond Kohlberg's six: "The model of an unconstrained ego identity is more exact and richer than an automony model that is developed exclusively out of a moral perspective."[14] Yet Habermas appears here again to be straddling what was pointed out early as the paradox of a pure intersubjectivity. What in fact does it mean to say "that interpretations of needs are no longer assumed as given, but are embedded in the discursive formation of the will?"[15] Habermas recognizes that this assertion can only mean that "inner nature is shifted into a utopian perspective."[16] Thus, the raw material of cultural traditions undergoes a kind of transvaluation, so that it ceases to be something with which the ego struggles in its attempt to secure an identity, and instead becomes something both fully open to reflection and, at the same time, able to function as a basis for committed action — in effect, a medium for pure hermeneutic understanding. Or, as Habermas writes in a rare attempt to describe utopian cultural conditions:

> The inner nature is made communicatively clear and transparent to the extent that needs can be linguistically preserved through aesthetic forms of expression or released from their paleosymbolic, prelinguistic state. That means, however, that the inner nature in its provisional, prior cultural preformation . . . maintains itself through a free access to interpretation possibilities of the cultural tradition. In the medium of value and norm building communication, in which aesthetic experiences enter, traditional, cultural contents would not be any longer simply patterns according to which needs could seek and find their appropriate interpretations.[17]

But if this argument is not to be taken to mean some sort of post-modern aesthetic dilettantism, then it must refer to the emancipatory reconstruction of real traditions. And real traditions must be embodied in and through the everyday life of particular individuals and groups: absolute equivalence is prohibited by the laws of logic alone. In this regard, Kohlberg's stages of moral development only make sense so far as they refer to real moral conflict, which excludes compromise and demands that parties accept and institute principles consensually secured, even at the price of injury or loss to some of the parties. Thus, if Habermas's seventh stage of a universal speech ethic is to have a basis in fact, it must refer to real choices with real consequences enacted within a framework of discourse that recognizes a rational basis for

differences among men and constrains them to act accordingly. Otherwise, one only has aestheticism masquerading as ethics.

This notion of an identity formed directly in and through discourse is, as Habermas admits, thoroughly utopian. Nevertheless, why Habermas subscribes to such a notion is not difficult to see; it appears to be the only alternative in contemporary society to abandoning identity formation entirely. Unlike Hegel, Habermas cannot depend on the historical elaboration of the political state as a stage for the moral life of the individual. Furthermore, the modern state has become predominantly an instrument of administration oriented toward the solution of problems occurring in the economic and technological sectors. Habermas's claim of universality for a model of identity based on rational discourse thus must come to terms with the expansion of systems of power with centralizing and totalizing consequences. The threat is that the final triumph of technocracy will lead to the dissolution of social identity entirely by "transposing the integration of inner nature *in toto* to another mode of socialization, that is, by uncoupling it from norms that need justification."[18] Here, Habermas is referring to the prospect of the cybernetic stabilization of societies through techniques like behavioural conditioning. Against such a development, he can only observe that "with growing individuation, the immunization of socialized individuals against decisions of the differentiated control center seems to gain in strength."[19] Having disallowed a moral basis to the state, Habermas now depends on the expansion of systems of power to eradicate tradition — and then pulls the autonomous individual out of a hat, so to speak, to engage in discourse.

It is not surprising that Habermas suspects the political motives of defenders of tradition and accuses them of advocating in one way or another uncritical submission to repressive authority. On the other hand, the pursuit of particular traditions can have relativising consequences that in fact only further the triumph of their declared opponent — namely, technocratic society. Habermas has uncovered some of the underlying political issues in his critique of the claim to universality of hermeneutic understanding advanced by writers like Gadamer, who affirms the ontological priority of cultural traditions over and against all forms of scientific understanding, including critical social science. The terms of reference of this debate require a closer examination, for it is by way of contrast with Gadamer's position that Habermas develops his own conception of critical reflection. But in securing his position *vis-à-vis* the claim to universality of hermeneutics, Habermas in fact closes off a whole range of possibilities for a dialectical understanding of the relationship between the hermeneutic appropriation of tradition and its rational reconstruction.[20]

Habermas acknowledges the sophistication of Gadamer's version of

hermeneutics. Gadamer has abandoned the inadequate formulation of hermeneutic understanding as essentially monological — that is, as a passive reconstruction of experience in the manner of historicism. For Gadamer, the interpretation of tradition is active and on-going, better conceived as a dialogue between past and present in which tradition may speak in unexpected ways. Hermeneutic understanding always proceeds from the practical intention to establish the relevance of tradition to the situation of the present. Hermeneutic understanding thus does not preclude critical reflection; rather, criticism moves within the circle of hermeneutic understanding. Tradition may reveal unrecognized possibilities, new principles, or guides to action. At the same time, however, the capacity to disclose the significance of tradition requires the recognition that reflecting consciousness is itself a product of history (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*). This concept is Gadamer's restatement of the "hermeneutic circle," which becomes now a decisive feature of the movement of consciousness in history.

But historical consciousness so conceived resigns itself to its own finitude. There is no invisible hand of the Absolute guiding the movement of consciousness in history as, for instance, there was for Hegel. In principle, Gadamer's position does not preclude revolution and the radical restructuring of social relations, since these too belong to the tradition of the West. In practice, however, the revelation of finitude imposes its own bias. Scientifically-motivated distantiation (*Verfremdung*) also moves within a circle prescribed by the community's own self-understanding. To designate certain thoughts and actions as incomprehensible or meaningless — e.g., the pathological symptoms of the psychoanalytic patient — is an activity that only makes sense in relation to a consensus already attained within a pre-existing community. Gadamer denies that a whole society can be made up of patients: "The emancipatory power of reflection, which the psychoanalyst claims, must therefore find its limits in the social consciousness which the analyst as well as his patient understands along with everyone else."[21] As an instrument of politics, distantiation is highly suspect. Are fellow social beings to be regarded as partners or as patients; is their behaviour evidence of pathology, or is it meaningful action? If our intention is finally to attain a practical consensus, how can this aim be accomplished on the basis of an activity which systematically denies people membership in the community? He who "sees through" his partners in the game of social life on a regular basis is, in Gadamer's words, a "spoilsport."[22] This tendency is precisely the stance of ideology criticism, but, if we accept the priority of hermeneutic understanding, where do we draw the line? Gadamer's own bias is clear:

> The inescapable consequence appears to be that, on
> principle, emancipatory consciousness really aims at the

dissolution of all constraints of authority — and this
means that its ultimate guiding image is an anarchistic
utopia. This certainly appears to be a hermeneutically
false consciousness.[23]

Having established the limits to criticism as the limits of the tradition of
criticism within the language community, Gadamer's hermeneutic circle
becomes a kind of narrowing spiral. Habermas judges:

In Gadamer's view, on-going tradition and hermeneutic
inquiry merge to a single point. Opposed to this is the
insight that the reflected appropriation of tradition
breaks down the nature-like substance of tradition and
alters the position of the subject in it.[24]

At this point, however, Habermas clearly means something different by
critical reflection. For to suggest that the character of tradition is irrevocably
altered through reflection is to introduce a feature into consciousness that lies,
so to speak, outside the hermeneutic circle, and thus offers a view of the
content of tradition as something other than self-disclosing. As we have
already seen, psychoanalysis is here the model for a critical social theory
precisely because it rejects the ordinary presumption of hermeneutic
understanding and searches through the "symptoms" (e.g., actions
themselves) for another order of meaning. What prompts our inquiry in the
first place is the apparent discrepancy between thought and action. For
Habermas, the totality of social relations is larger than the sublimation of
social processes within linguistic tradition (Gadamer's universe of
Sprachlichkeit) — and therefore uncovering this totality through analysis is
the starting point for Habermas's "depth hermeneutics": "Language is also a
medium of domination and social power. It serves to legitimate relations of
organized force."[25] Language is conceived as a form of deception, which
requires not hermeneutic understanding but ideological criticism, and
proceeds on the basis of a systematic comparison of the immanent meaning of
situations with an account of their extrinsic significance. The outcome of such
an analysis is not merely another interpretation, but a causal explanation: one
produces testable hypotheses, not only interpretive judgements.

Habermas's notion of emancipatory theory rests on the possibility of such
an enterprise. What remains theoretically ambiguous in Habermas's
formulation of critical theory is the exact nature of the movement from the
former back to the latter, for social-scientific explanation must finally provide
a basis for new hermeneutic understanding. This ambiguity is precisely

Habermas's point: if the explanation makes *more* sense than previous immanent interpretations, then in some sense the subject is irrevocably altered. Thus, after the Marxist critique of political economy, we are no longer able to view economic relations and their corresponding justifications without suspicion. Similarly, in the wake of the Freudian account of sexuality, the family and relations of authority in general must be seen in terms of their dependence on psychosexual repression and the mobilization of unconscious and infantile motives.

Gadamer's position can also be considered as an attack on the claim to a privileged vantage-point on society made by social science. Social-scientific knowledge may contribute to a hermeneutically false separation of the social engineer from the society that he manipulated by using rational techniques in the service of unspecified interests (a danger to which Habermas is equally sensitive). Gadamer claims that Habermas's alternative of emancipatory science is dangerously unanchored. To what community do the critical theorists finally belong? Or, as Gadamer observes, does criticism finally arrive at its own Nietzschean apotheosis? But Habermas, of course, would never accept this characterization of critical theory as disembodied ideological criticism. Emancipatory science ultimately originates with the pressure of suffering experienced within life itself. The objectivity of institutionally-imposed suffering, of oppression and exploitation, is also part of everyday life. Transcendence of suffering is expressed not only through scientific reflection, but also in art; through jokes, through linguistic usages that openly or secretly rebel against the hegemony of prevailing authority; through countless efforts to create and protect liberated spaces within daily life where the pressure of domination is suspended, if only temporarily. Furthermore, in answer to Gadamer, the range of this anti-authoritarian appropriation of the linguistic and symbolic content of tradition can be shown to coincide with the social-structural bases of domination, the explanation of which is the intention of critical social science. But to divorce the explanation of objective social conditions from the motivation of ameliorating unnecessary suffering is a mistake. Social-scientific knowledge, by identifying the causes for present suffering, also exposes the realistic potential for the utopian reconstruction of society.

This more open-ended conception of the relationship between emancipatory reflection and the suppressed interest in social change is still visible in Habermas's early formulation of the knowledge-constitutive interests in *Knowledge and Human Interests*. There he speaks of the course of history in terms of "traces of violence that deform repeated attempts at dialogue and recurrently close off the path to unconstrained communication" and therefore he can conceive of emancipation in terms of "a dialectic that takes the historical traces of suppressed dialogue and reconstructs what has

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been suppressed."[26] Though the actual status of the "quasi-transcendental" cognitive interests remains unclear, the supposition of their logical independence introduces a lateral dimension to history. The actual deformation of communication by institutions of domination closes off utopian possibilities that might otherwise have been realized. But as Habermas has attemped to clarify the status of the knowledge-constitutive interests through his reconstruction of historical materialism, this open-ended statement of emancipatory reflection has given way to another framework in which the course of history takes on the appearance of necessity. In this framework, the progression of societies from primitive to advanced in terms of functional complexity, and in particular with regard to the elaboration of systems of power, takes place through "evolutionary learning processes" that enable new forms of social integration to be developed in response to problems that "overload" existing systems. Where this same historical progression for Marx was driven by the revolutionizing of the forces of production in a context of conflict-ridden relations between classes, the logic of technical development is now matched by a parallel logic of development for forms of social integration. Power thus loses its contingent character; it is now a functionally necessary element in the evolution of societies. Faced with the problem of explaining how exploitation and oppression can objectively increase in scope while society is presumably moving to a higher stage of moral development, Habermas insists:

> I see an explanation in the fact that new levels of learning
> mean not only expanded ranges of options but also new
> problem situations. A higher stage of development of
> productive forces and of social integration does bring
> relief from problems of superseded social formation. But
> the problems that arise at the new stage of development
> — insofar as they are at all comparable with the old ones
> — increase in intensity.[27]

But this dialectic of self-generating problems and solutions envisioned as the *a priori* logic of social evolution exactly reproduces the institutional history of Western societies. Its ultimate justification is teleological — the principle of communicative competence, posited through every act of communication, is progressively transformed into the organizational content of institutions.

Increasingly more adequate communication, in which problems can become themes, becomes the basis for a new institutional order. This teleological framework, in which formal properties of social systems are

translated into institutional features of advanced societies, is typical of functionalist theories of social evolution. Parsons's theory, for instance, to which Habermas is in many ways analogous, depends on the functional prerequisites of social systems in general to act as a master pattern for differentiation and the growth of specialized institutions.[28] The empirical reality to which both theories refer is undeniable. In Parsons's case, this reality is role-differentiation and bureaucratic specialization (what Durkheim identified as organic solidarity); for Habermas, it is the institutionalization of discourse and the growing primacy of science and education in modern societies. But does the appearance and development of these institutional features of Western societies, whatever their ultimate moral significance, justify hypostatizing in retrospect the history of their occurrence as the necessary logic of social evolution? The earlier conception of knowledge-constitutive interests, however uncertain their status, leaves open the alternative that the institutionalization of discourse in the course of a history linked to technical and economic development may, in the final analysis, be merely fortuitous and not in some sense an absolute necessity. The later teleological reconstruction of historical materialism, with its equation of ontogenetic socialization processes and the history of societies, closes off this possibility. This conclusion would seem to imply that to avail themselves of the full range of communicative resources, all societies must reproduce the institutional history of the West.

Habermas is the first to admit that his reconstruction of historical materialism is only tentative and rests finally on the empirical evidence of anthropology. I would suggest, however, that he has carried over the monolithic conception of tradition of thinkers like Gadamer into the area of comparative cultural studies. This transfer necessitates some kind of functional mechanism (analogous to, for instance, Parsons's "adaptive upgrading") as a guarantee of social dynamics. An alternative hypothesis might emphasize instead the multiplex organization of culture, with disjunct spheres more or less receptive to criticism and rational reconstruction. That utopian possibilities have only partially and incompletely been realized in the past and in other cultures can, to be sure, be explained in terms of objective constraints on the institutionalization of discourse. Again, this is a problem for anthropological research — though the alternative I am proposing is also more in keeping with Weber's methodology.

But an important question — and the decisive one in political terms — concerns the *future* of discourse. Once argumentative justification in Habermas's sense has been discovered and utilized in one social setting (our own), it profoundly alters both the internal relation between spheres of cultural tradition within various societies, as well as the relationships between societies, regardless of their location in a general scheme of stages of historical

development. Otherwise, one would have to conclude that the capacity to appreciate discourse ultimately requires the precise technical and economic arrangements of industrial society as it is presently constituted. But this conclusion reduces practical questions to technical imperatives. In a universal debate about practical questions, discursive validation can be used not only by us and *for* us, but also *against* us; such argument about practical questions cannot be prematurely halted by pointing to the inevitability and necessity of the prevailing technical apparatus. At the same time, discourse can be envisioned within a variety of cultural contexts in which the diverse elements of cultural traditions are creatively reappropriated and reorganized according to communicative standards and thus are able to participate in the same universal debate.

At this point, all I am suggesting is that the above alternative to Habermas's conception of the institutionalization of discourse has a certain plausibility, and that it is a more accurate statement of what is likely to ensue as increasingly more diverse groups are brought into a world-wide communicative universe. Like Habermas's reconstruction of historical materialism, its empirical realization requires verification. Habermas's limited theory of emancipation, it appears, precludes further practical and theoretical exploration in two directions. First, the evolutionary logic of world-views obscures the practical question of *utopia* through its insistence on a pre-established harmony with the course of historical development.[29] In the alternative framework I am proposing, utopias take the place of world-views and are given themes thematized as subjects of discourse. Utopia signifies here concrete attempts to reconstruct cultural traditions, constituting them into a "way of life" capable of withstanding discursive examination and thereby worth preserving and promoting. The claim to such a way of life is on a different plane from pursuit of economic gain; in a sense, it is non-negotiable. In hermeneutic terms, comprehension and validation are aspects of the same process. This point does not signify surrender to tradition, as Gadamer indicates — for there is no guarantee that an appeal to tradition is always made with emancipatory intentions. But only through free access to discourse can the difference be determined, for the emancipatory use of cultural tradition not only withstands discursive criticism, but is thereby strengthened and clarified, while the repressive mobilization of tradition must prevent discourse at all costs. Discourse thus becomes a means for mediating between self-reflection as an aspect of the immanent appropriation of tradition and the larger communicative universe.

The concept of utopia suggests an approach to the emancipatory reconstruction of the cultural life of social groups without at the same time submitting to the unquestioned authority of tradition. In this way, it provides an answer to the dilemma of tradition and emancipation addressed in the

Habermas-Gadamer debate. At the same time, this approach does not extricate us from the hermeneutic circle in quite the manner proposed by Habermas, for the content of an emancipated society cannot be derived simply through the application of the theory of communicative competence. Utopia requires hermeneutics in a different and special sense, since it uses hermeneutic understanding to construct a counter-image of reality free of domination and repression — one that may be validated through rational discourse. This solution also places a special responsibility on social groups making a claim to the validity of a way of life. They must be prepared to define, in terms amenable to discourse, exactly what they mean by the "good life." Ultimately, if discourse is to find a secure place in modern life (which is equally Habermas's aim), it must be able to resist pressures toward administrative efficiency. As Habermas has shown, the dominant strategy and principle means of social control in late capitalist society is the capacity to translate claims issuing from diverse groups into economic terms — higher wages, more consumer goods, jobs, compensation for injuries, and so on. Alternatives to prevailing arrangements can then be dismissed on grounds of economic efficiency, the will of the majority, or the requirements of technological progress. The extension of discourse within modern societies thus hinges on the recognition of non-economic motives. Here, the utopian reconstruction of traditions and claims by diverse groups to the validity of ways of life offer one source of support for discourse itself.

The second area in which Habermas's theory closes off further exploration has to do with the nature of rationality itself. In the earlier work of the Frankfurt school the ambivalent character of reason was acknowledged: reason served as a medium for reflection and emancipation, but also as a means of extending control over both nature and man, as an instrument of domination. One avenue of response to this conception of rationality has been to envision an alternative that overcomes the interest in domination and achieves simultaneously a new relationship with both nature and man. This view has been the direction pursued by Herbert Marcuse, guided primarily by considerations of aesthetic experience. In Habermas's words, Marcuse intends that the "viewpoint of possible technical control would be replaced by one of preserving, fostering, and releasing the potentialities of nature . . .".[30] Habermas has rejected this attempt to establish an intersubjective relationship with nature on the grounds that it attempts to apply a form of rationality appropriate to symbolic interaction to the wrong object-domain, that of work and instrumental action. This exclusion of scientific rationality from thematic construction is central to the further development of a theory of communicative rationality. In effect, the project of accumulating scientific knowledge now has a status independent of the development of world-views, a fairly traditional and objectivist view of science. Recent work in the

philosophy of science has, in fact, undermined Habermas's position and stressed instead the role of world-views even in defining the interaction of man and nature, which can no longer be assumed to be an historically invariant relation.[31]

What Habermas is attempting to secure by the distinction between instrumental action and symbolic interaction is likewise a conception of communicative rationality independent of the development of world-views. Thus he defines "truth" as the "peculiar compulsion (*Zwang*) to unconstrained *(zwangloser)* universal recognition."[32] But this "compulsion" cannot be received in a context-free manner; it represents the progressive embedding of self-reflection within historical institutions. Thus, precisely its character as compulsion cannot be overlooked, for the institutionalization of discourse within particular contexts does not so easily shed its own burden of violence, conflict, and partiality. Adorno and Horkheimer were guided by this insight in their study of the "Dialectic of Enlightenment." That discourse here continues to be used as a weapon in defense of particular institutions, and a particular conception of maturity and social identity, narrows the range of human possibilities. In the alternative framework I am proposing, the full scope of rationality is yet to be disclosed — but will include areas of experience and elements of wisdom that go beyond the bounds of any single tradition. Empirically speaking, it is necessary to show that self-reflection has been realized in a variety of cultural settings and has been variously anchored in different institutions with different purposes. A full account must construct themes for all of these forms of rationality.

At the same time, this revision implies that theories of cognitive development — like those of Piaget and Kohlberg — must be seen in a different light. As scientific theories they remain subject to the canons of scientific methodology and empirical verification. But their metatheoretical status as universal guides to the formation of a social identity is less certain. They refer precisely to those aspects of identity-formation which have been rendered problematic in one particular setting in which discourse has been institutionalized. Kohlberg's stages of moral development, as Habermas employs them, signify role-orientations and motivations that have become pathological from the point of view of a society organized along communicative lines. Their status is not that of universal stages of historical development, but of identifiable locations within contemporary social structures — locations linked to the pathological deformation of communication. The theory, then, is an attempt to secure an emancipatory outcome against other possibilities. It holds up a model of "ideal" development leading to a mature identity able to fully realize its communicative potential. This model seems to me to describe the general predicament of any critical-emancipatory science — Marx and Freud

included. Aspects of social experience that have become problematic and which are perceived symptomatically become the basis for a rational reconstruction which projects an image of restored integrity and unity. Thus the constructive and creative side of emancipatory theory, through which an image of "personhood" is effectively conveyed, deserves emphasis. These considerations also cast some doubt on Habermas's formula that, in a setting of unconstrained discourse, the outcome will be determined only by the force of the better argument. How, indeed, are we to recognize the better argument? If we do not wish to fall back on the consensus model of hermeneutic understanding, the acknowledgement of an imaginative, visionary, and mythopoeic dimension to communication and experience seems unavoidable.

Perhaps the best illustration of the rational reconstruction of tradition along these lines is Habermas's own attempts to restore the tradition of bourgeois individualism within a discursive framework. On this point the earlier theorizing of the Frankfurt School foundered. They had rejected the Marxian conception of a revolutionary subject because it submerged the dialectic of subjectivity in a necessitarian logic that reproduced the irrationality of the whole; but, at the same time, the potential of the bourgeois individual for unitary experience remained entombed within its own uncriticized practice. Horkheimer and Adorno aptly describe this quandary:

> The independence and incomparability of the individual
> crystallize resistance to the blind, repressive force of the
> irrational whole. But, historically, this resistance was only
> made possible by the blindness and irrationality of each
> indepedent and incomparable individual.[33]

For Habermas, however, the bourgeois individual can become an emancipatory subject in a practical sense precisely because he recognizes a form of practice — i.e., institutionalized discourse — in which this unfulfilled potential for wholeness and integrity may be realized. Thus: "With the historical form of the bourgeois individual, there appeared those (still unfulfilled) claims to autonomous ego-organization within the framework of an independent — that is, rationally founded — practice."[34]

But Habermas is proposing this reconstruction of bourgeois tradition precisely at a time in history when its original sources in the family, religion, and vocations have been largely eroded through the development of late-capitalist social structures. In effect, the tradition of the bourgeois individual has lost its institutional footing and it is possible to imagine a post-capitalist society in which the bourgeois form of reproduction has altogether disappeared. At the same time, as long as socialization in terms of "norms that

require justification" persists — that is, as long as institutionalized discourse retains its precarious hold — one can anticipate a variety of crises concerning legitimation, motivation, and identity-formation. In this fateful setting, Habermas's reconstruction of the bourgeois individual is a utopian effort in the sense discussed earlier; it offers a renewed image of social identity, where crises are overcome through the achievement of a new kind of integration of the personality, as an alternative to the sacrifice of social identity entirely in the face of system imperatives. Achieving this identity depends on access to discourse for its concrete elaboration — while, at the same time, it offers the hope of securing discourse against the threat of its dissolution. The constructive and imaginative elements in the return to bourgeois tradition cannot be explained away.

Habermas's appeal to a universal logic of moral development in fact obscures the specific discursive context in which a reconstructed conception of the individual is concretly realized in contemporary society. In its original form, the category of the individual functioned as ideology. As Habermas has shown, this ideological mode of justification is no longer necessary — but neither is this the principal use to which the concept of the individual is put at present. The "rights of the individual" is in reality a constitutive theme in a social movement with emancipatory aims: the movement which opposes politically-motivated murder, torture, imprisonment, and other forms of degradation and oppression of individuals and groups. In this context, the suppression of the individual is synonymous with the suppression of discourse, while the appropriation of tradition supports social relations in which discourse may be realized. The category of the individual does in this case specify an emancipatory subject and, through practical organization for collective action along these lines, the conditions for an emancipated society are brought closer to fruition. This use of the concept of the individual in the contemporary world, probably its most decisive, seems to me to be fundamentally transformed from the original bourgeois conception. To be sure, it is not inconsistent with Habermas's own formulation, but to the extent that he has merely replaced the abstract category from bourgeois ideology with the formal properties of communication, he seems to have largely overlooked its real emancipatory potential.[35]

I have so far attempted to point to some problematic aspects of Habermas's version of critical theory and to speculate on the reasons why he has followed this particular course in his theorizing. In general, Habermas's position, I believe, represents a "convergent" image of emancipation, in which different viewpoints and cultural traditions converge on a single, definitive understanding of the meaning of emancipation — presumably reflecting a single world society with a single extensive culture. This image is projected as the hypothetical outcome of the increasing institutionalization of discourse in

every sphere of society. An alternative image of emancipation is a "divergent" one, which does not assume that the outcome of discursive processes is everywhere necessarily identical. In concrete terms, a divergent understanding of emancipation posits many diverse groups engaged in emancipatory activity with different starting-and end-points.

Such a divergent view of emancipation is, I think, directly implied in the conditions Habermas spells out for authentic discourse. First, discourse does not signify the reduction of subjects to a unity. Indeed, the concept only makes sense while subjects remain different, even as they achieve mutual understanding. Otherwise, understanding could be recreated monologically, without recourse to respective subjectivities. The inherent "fairness" of discourse as true dialogue, in which power and interest considerations are suspended, requires that the participants will not be constrained to come away more alike than when they began. Second, this requirement implies that social meanings in the hermeneutic sense must remain irreducible and primitive elements of theory. Meanings may be mutually understood without necessarily being reduced to commonality. Third, the origin within historical traditions and the order in which norms are discursively examined is important. Everything cannot be equally questionable to everyone — certainly not at the same time. And finally, practical discourse only makes sense to the extent that it is concretely embedded in the fabric of everyday life. The transition to discourse begins with pressures originating in everyday life, just as emancipatory outcomes provide everyday life with a renewed basis. This point is perhaps best illustrated by considering the opposite of embedded discourse — namely, the disembedded language of systems theory, where system imperatives overshadow practical considerations (Habermas's own example of the only form of "reason" which can treat cultural contexts naturalistically and manipulate them at will).

What I have called here a "divergent" image of emancipation may at first appear to bear some resemblance to the notion of "pluralism." Pluralist politics, however, are not discursive — or are only fortuitously so. Pluralism presupposes an adversary relationship among parties and aims merely at a balance among competing interests. If it furthers emancipatory ends, it does so unconsciously, since it does not require the institutionalization of discourse in the sense discussed. Habermas has documented a number of illusory forms of discourse, including various kinds of negotiation and arbitration in which special interests are represented. In these cases, discourse is a matter of social convention. In reality, decisions are being made on the basis of the distribution of power and the implicit threat of sanctions. Particularly interesting in this context are parliamentary debates, where the format for argument is clearly discursive and the participants attempt as much as possible to disguise the exercise of power and thus maintain the appearance of

discourse. The boundary-line between parliamentary behaviour and authentic discouse is not easily drawn. On the one hand, there is the question of whether it is the intention of the participants to arrive at mutual understanding. On the other hand, if it is possible to imagine the outcome changing simply by altering the structure and composition of parliamentary representation, then discourse is to that extent correspondingly absent. The outcome of authentic discourse would be invariant under this kind of structural transformation. Or, in Habermas's words: "communication will not be hindered by constraints arising from its own structure."[36]

A politics based on discourse would have a wholly different character. Not subject to power constraints, it could not successfully ignore or suppress claims originating from the relatively powerless. So far as such groups are admitted into discourse, and are willing to engage along with other parties in discursive examination, outcomes can only reflect the inherent fairness and reasonableness of demands. Discourse may here function as the only means through which the weak can find a voice. To the extent that we apply notions like "justice" and "freedom" to situations, we already recognize this point intuitively. Habermas has provided a definition in terms of discourse of the concepts of truth, freedom, and justice as they are realized under conditions of pure intersubjectivity. These terms refer to symmetries in the "distribution of assertion and disputation, revelation and hiding, prescription and following among the partners of communication."[37] Thus the achievement of truth requires "unrestricted discussion,"; freedom requires that "based on the mutuality of unimpaired self-representation . . . it is possible to achieve subtle nearness along with inviolable distance among the partners,"; and justice requires that "universal understanding exists as well as the necessity of universalized norms."[38] Under the conditions defined by these three symmetries it ought to be possible for interpretations of the "good life" based on cultural traditions to be brought into public view, fully understood by all parties, and then enacted according to standards of justice. Yet the requirement that these three symmetries be simultaneously realized — that is, not one at the expense of another — would certainly seem to exclude a convergent solution. Speaking practically, discourse must allow for a variety of interpretations of exactly what the good life means.

Where Habermas has himself faltered is in applying the discursive model of politics in a class-divided industrial society. Marxism could be certain of the unity of theory and practice since both were aspects of the universality of the proletariat's status as a group. This insight meant initially as assured harmony between processes of enlightenment and the realization of proletarian interests. But to the extent that the practical realization of those interests came to be associated with the organization of the Communist Party, strategic considerations in mobilizing the masses took precedence over the attainment of truth, and thus theory divides into, on the one hand, organizational

questions, and, on the other, ideological orthodoxy. Habermas's commitment, however, it not to the proletariat as a group, but to discourse as both a means of validating truth claims and an arena for collective will-formation. In this regard, the Party solution ruthlessly suppresses discourse. Yet a number of problems arise in applying to relations between classes a therapeutic model borrowed from psychoanalysis. The ruling class and the ruled class are in no sense presumed equals. The existence of both groups as opponents is explained in terms of prevailing structures of domination. The working class can hardly expect the ruling class to engage willingly in a dialogue the suppression of which is absolutely essential to the maintenance of its own privileges. But more importantly, the working class must likewise see its own existence as a pathological symptom due to conditions of domination, and thus must argue for its own abolition as a group with a social identity. This position is very different from Marxism, where the universality of the proletariat was assured and naturalistically grounded in Marxist theory.

Regardless of these difficulties, it may nevertheless still be possible to apply a discursive model of politics to relations between classes.[39] The institutionalization of discourse, however, has the effect of opening society to discussion of what are ultimately "classless" issues — namely, real democratic participation in collective decisions as well as full access for everyone to the society-wide interpretation of needs. What I would like to point out is a fundamental difference between class politics and a politics of diversity. For the latter does not require a pathological self-identification. Quite to the contrary, pathology in this instance assumes the form of the loss of the capacity to speak for oneself, while discourse provides an occasion for the revelation of differences. This distinction also resolves, I think, Habermas's problem of relating struggle and enlightenment, which in a class context appear to be mutually exclusive. Struggle signifies an assertion of will grounded in already effective discourse, while enlightenment takes the form of a "therapeutic" discourse that must assume that prevailing conditions are pathological and that action is therefore impossible until a new understanding has been achieved. But for a group attempting to restore its integrity and autonomy, the situation is radically different. Recognition and understanding of one's plight — i.e., processes of enlightenment — serve to reveal bases for an identity rather than acting to undermine it. At the same time, struggle itself aims at securing conditions for unrestricted discourse.

To whom is Habermas's critical theory addressed? His own answer is highly ambiguous — in part because there is no reference to the actual groups implicated by the theory or to their concrete potential. Instead, Habermas advocates waiting until the "institutional preconditions for practical discourse among the general public are fulfilled."[40] Yet the cynicism prevailing in modern societies seems to dismiss any possibility for the practical realization of discourse in politics. Habermas writes:

> ... a tendency has set in to reject as illusion the claim that political and practical questions may be clarified discursively ... In the mass democracies of the advanced capitalistic social systems, the bourgeois ideas of freedom and self-determination are being constricted and have yielded to the "realistic" interpretation that political discourse in public, in political parties and organizations, is in any case mere appearance and will remain such under all conceivable circumstances.[41]

In the end, Habermas's political recommendations are remarkably tame. Without fundamentally questioning the organization of industrial society, he speaks of ways of extending the range of public participation in decision-making. Administrative exclusiveness and technocratic ideology are to give way to a greater responsiveness to informed collective consciousness. Given the radical claims made for discourse itself, the moderation of Habermas's utopian vision is at the very least somewhat suspect. The extent to which the existing political, economic, and technological organization can withstand full discursive examination remains an absolutely crucial question. To assume that it will be left largely unaltered just because it is essential to human survival is to admit to a cynical realism not compatible with Habermas's expressed intentions. On the other hand, perhaps Habermas's unwillingness to directly consider this question is linked to his insistence on the theory of social evolution.

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Notes

1. For the critique of the Enlightenment, see Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, New York: Seabury Press, 1972; for the critique of Marxism, see Albrecht Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1971; the problem of technocracy is discussed in Habermas's essay "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'" in Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1970; the relationship of state and civil society in late capitalism is discussed in Habermas's *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1973; for the conservative response to technological society see Robert Nisbet, *Community and Power*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1962, Jacques Ellul, *The*

Technological Society, New York: Random House, 1964, or any of the numerous works of Ivan Illich.

2. In general, it has remained for Habermas's North American interpreters to stress the potential of his theory for informing decentralist and anti-institutional radicalism: community action and cooperative movements, "people-oriented" alternate technology, the rights of women, minorities, etc. See Trent Schroyer's discussion and critique of Habermas in the *Critique of Domination*, New York: George Braziller, 1973.

3. This discussion of Habermas's theory of communicative competence is partly based on material from the Christian Gauss lectures at Princeton in the Spring of 1971 graciously provided by Jeremy Shapiro.

4. "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence" in Hans Peter Dreitzel, *Recent Sociology No. 2*, London: Collier-MacMillan, 1970, p. 129.

5. *Ibid.*

6. See the essays collected in *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976. Two of these have been translated into English and published in *Telos* as "On Social Identity" (No. 19, 1974) and "Moral Development and Ego Identity" (No. 24, 1975). Quotations are from the English sources.

7. Habermas, "On Social Identity", *op. cit.*, p. 96.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

13. Habermas, "Moral Development and Ego Identity".

14. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

15. *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 94.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

20. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, New York: Seabury Press, 1975 for the claim to universality of hermeneutics. The hermeneutic controversy, including arguments from both Habermas and Gadamer, is contained in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971. Also see a restatement of the controversy that emphasizes some of the progressive implications of hermeneutics for Critical Theory by Dieter Misgeld, "Critical Theory and Hermeneutics", in John O'Neill, *Critical Theory*, New York: Seabury Press, 1976.

21. Gadamer, "Rhetorik, Hermeneutik and Ideologiekritik", in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, pp. 81-82 (translations from these essays are mine).

22. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

24. Habermas, *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften*, Beiheft 5 of *Philosophische Rundschau*, Tübingen, 1967, p. 173.

25. Habermas, "Zu Gadamers 'Wahrheit und Methode'" in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, p. 53.

26. *Knowledge and Human Interests*, London: Heinemann, 1972, p. 315.

27. "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" (originally appearing in *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus*, and republished in English), *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1979, pp. 163-164.

28. Talcott Parsons, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966.

29. For an investigation of the concept of utopia as a means of understanding the "lost" possibilities of history, see my *Utopia and Critical Theory*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Toronto, 1977.

30. Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, p. 86.

31. I am thinking here of Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*, London: NLB, 1975; also David Bohm, *Fragmentation and Wholeness*, Jerusalem: Van Leer Foundation, 1976. The controversy in the sociology of knowledge over the status of scientific knowledge is reviewed in Michael Mulkay, *Science and the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979.

32. Habermas, "Der Universalitätsanspruch der Hermeneutik," in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik*, p. 154.

33. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 241.

34. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, p. 125.

35. An equally compelling case can be made for the reconstruction of working-class tradition along the lines of Habermas's communication theory. Francis Hearn, in *Domination, Legitimation, and Resistance*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978 has documented the important function of historical remembrance in England for the formation of working-class opposition to capitalist society. It was precisely the basic humanity and essential wholeness of this working-class recollection of the past that needed to be systematically denied in order to effectively assimilate the workers into their industrial role. Examples from outside European history are perhaps the most graphic — opposition to colonialism and imperialism. Here, the very possibility of opposition requires first establishing a *voice* distinct from the ruling powers.

36. Dreitzel, p. 143.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

39. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, London: Heinemann, 1974, pp. 28-37, for a discussion of the applicability of a model of therapeutic discourse to class relations.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

MERCANTILISM, LIBERALISM AND KEYNESIANISM: CHANGING FORMS OF STATE INTERVENTION IN CAPITALIST ECONOMIES

David A. Wolfe

The distinctive feature of political experience in advanced capitalist society is the extent to which state activity pervades virtually all aspects of social, cultural and economic life. The predominant role of the state in contemporary capitalist society is a far cry from the role ascribed to it during the nineteenth century, when it was subordinate to the self-regulating market. This development has posed a grave dilemma for the contractarian political theory of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, informed by the conception of the self-regulating market, which provided the basis for the development of modern liberal democratic political institutions. According to contractarian theory, these liberal democratic political institutions — political parties, elections, representative assemblies and a responsible executive — determine the policy role of the state. They fulfill in effect a dual role, providing the means for the expression and authoritative resolution of political differences while simultaneously providing the means to ensure that the results of the political decision-making process are regarded as just and legitimate.[1]

The expansion of the areas of state involvement in the economy throughout this century is largely the result of the political pressures imposed upon the state through the operation of representative political institutions. The extension of the mass franchise and the consequent development of mass-based political parties provided the mechanism by which those groups in society which were most vulnerable to the unimpeded operation of the self-regulating market could utilize the state to defend themselves. As Karl Polanyi has pointed out, the increased regulation of the destructive potential of the market was the result of the pressure exerted by the very social and economic classes which had been brought into existence by the expansion of the market:

> For a century the dynamics of modern society were governed by a double movement: the market expanded continuously but this movement was met by a counter-movement checking the expansion in definite directions. Vital though such a countermovement was for the protection of society, in the last analysis it was incompatible with the self-regulation of the market, and thus with the market system itself.[2]

DAVID WOLFE

The Crisis of 'Governability'

The slow but steady transformation in the economic role of the state throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century was brought about by the operation of the liberal democratic decision rules for the governing of capitalist society, in themselves derived from the ideology of individualistic market competition. However, as the economic role of the state expanded to protect society from destroying itself through market competition, the political basis for the legitimacy of liberal democratic decision-making processes underwent a change as well. It became increasingly important for the policy outputs of these decision-making processes to exhibit the same principles upon which the decision rules themselves were based. In other words, the formal political equality of liberal democratic political institutions had to result in a substantial degree of social and economic equality in the policy outputs of those institutions.[3] At the same time, the enhanced popular expectations concerning the democratic character of the state's policy outputs have imposed a growing burden upon the representative institutions of liberal democracy to continue to play their assigned role. Concern over the ability of such institutions to respond to the rising level of popular expectations has been expressed most recently in the literature discussing the 'ungovernability' of modern democracies or the problem of governmental 'overload'. What these theories have suggested is that:

> the conflict-generating potential of the institutions of the democratic polity by far outweighs their conflict-resolving capacity. As a consequence, the state becomes increasingly unable to reconcile the demands transmitted through democratic institutions with the requirments of the national and international economy.[4]

The growing concern with the breakdown of traditional liberal democratic modes of political representation masks, however, the true source of the problem. What has broken down, in fact, is not the mode of political representation symbolized by mass-based parties, popular elections and representative assemblies, but rather the explicit compromise over the nature and content of state intervention in the economy fashioned among the major classes in capitalist society in the period during and following World War II. This compromise, which has been termed the 'post-war settlement' between capital and labour, was based upon the premise that steady economic growth in the advanced capitalist countries, stabilized by Keynesian economic policies in a reformed international monetary system and international trading regime, could finance a sufficient level of income security programmes

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to maintain social harmony and ensure the regeneration of capitalist social relations of production.[5] The real source of the contemporary crisis of the liberal democratic mode of political representation is, therefore, not the inherent inability of its institutions to reconcile their conflict-generating and conflict-resolving roles, but rather the growing inability of the state in those societies to maintain simultaneously the necessary balance between a stable pattern of economic growth and capital accumulation on the one hand, and the anticipated standard of publicly-financed social consumption on the other.

The most obvious manifestation of this growing inability has been the emergence of prolonged periods of inflation in all the advanced capitalist economies. While much of the discussion of the inflationary phenomenon in these societies has focused upon its narrowly economic aspects, there has been a growing recognition that at the root of the problem lies the competitive economic struggle (which is inherent in capitalist social relations of production) over the distribution of the social product. The substantial expansion of state intervention in the postwar economies of the advanced capitalist countries, which has served to limit and to contain the socially destructive potential of the market, has also served to displace the competitive struggle to the realm of the state. Much of the recent prescriptive writing on the current dilemmas of the advanced capitalist economies has focused upon the need for governments to adopt a firmer approach to the control of capitalist economies and to restore the prerequisites of economic growth by tipping the balance in the current struggle in favour of capital. This focus implies the adoption by the state of a new role — that of a disciplinarian, restraining individuals and enterprises for the sake of their mutual long-term interest. The emergence of the belief in what Robert Keohane has termed the 'democratic disciplinary state' constitutes the late twentieth century's version of the solution afforded by Keynesian economic ideas to the crisis of the Great Depression.[6]

The problem with this current diagnosis of what ails the advanced capitalist economies is its inability to appreciate the inherent contradiction between the need for self-discipline and democratic political institutions. The contradiction makes the prospects for such an authoritative resolution of the current economic problems of advanced capitalism seem rather remote. A thorough understanding of the reasons for its remoteness can only be derived, however, from a detailed examination of the social and economic forces which have contributed to the evolution of the economic role of the state in advanced capitalism.

The Economic Functions of the State

The state has been defined as that set of institutions within a society that

exercises the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.[7] In a society structured along class lines, the role of that institution which monopolizes the legitimate use of physical force is to maintain social order, to guarantee the stability of the conditions necessary for the reproduction of the social relations of production. The state is not a social entity which embodies a specific institutional essence of its own; it is a product of the existing class relations in a society. In this conception, power does not exist as a neutral institutional force arising out of the structures of the state itself, but rather represents a condensation of the relations of power existing among the various classes in the society. This conception of the sources of state power and the institutional forms of the state is fundamentally a dynamic one emphasizing that changes in the specific form and role of the state reflect changes in the mode of production and in class relations.[8]

Since the dominant economic feature of all class-based societies is the appropriation of the surplus product from the class of direct producers by the dominant class, it follows that the major economic function of the state in class-based societies is the maintenance of the social and political conditions under which the economic surplus can be extracted. The distinctive feature of capitalism as a mode of production is that the extraction of the surplus product takes place through the purely economic medium of the free exchange of equivalent commodities in the market. Capitalism is also the first mode of production in which the surplus itself is transformed into a commodity — capital — which provides the basis for the further extension of the cycle of surplus appropriation and thus for the further accumulation of capital. In this mode of production, the principal role of the state is to ensure that the universal rights of all producers to their private property is respected and that the sanctity of transactions based on the exchange of commodities is guaranteed. Thus, the basic economic function of the state in the capitalist mode of production has been defined as the accumulation function.[9]

The historical variations in the way in which the state has performed this function have been a reflection of the changing political relation of class forces in different societies. Thus the changing forms of economic policy adopted by the capitalist state represent the different ways in which the state has performed its accumulation function at different stages in the development of capitalist relations of production. Mercantilism is the economic policy conducive to the emergence of the capitalist mode of production or what Marx called the process of 'primitive accumulation'; liberalism is the economic policy of a fully developed and economically dominant industrial capitalism; and Keynesianism is the form of economic intervention adopted by the state at the stage of advanced capitalism.[10]

The definition of the state that has been presented also includes the notion that in order to maintain the cohesion of a social order, the state must be

recognized as that association within the social order which has a legitimate right to monopolize the use of coercive force. The concept of legitimacy as an important element in the existence of a structure of power and domination is also derived from the work of Max Weber, who observed that the continued exercise of virtually every type of political domination required self-justification through an appeal to commonly accepted myths or values which supported the existing distribution of power.[11] Defined as such, the concept of legitimacy includes the whole range of myths, symbols and normative values shared by members of a social order in the religiously, customarily, legally or politically sanctioned right of the holders of positions of power and domination to exercise that power. The prevailing ideology justifies the existing distribution of power and material resources in a society.

To the extent that the state comprises the particular set of institutions in a society which maintains the social and political conditions necessary for the extraction and appropriation of the surplus product from the class of direct producers, the manner in which the existing system of power and domination is legitimated also serves to justify the particular mode of surplus extraction which characterizes that society. In capitalist society it is the ideology of the exchange of equivalents, or the free exchange of commodities in the market, which justifies the prevailing distribution of power and resources. However, this ideology is peculiar to the liberal phase of capitalism and is not a wholly appropriate description of the legitimating values of capitalism in its nascent, mercantile, or fully developed advanced capitalist phase. In each separate phase, a different legitimating ideology serves to justify both the dominant mode of surplus extraction and the particular form of economic intervention practised by the state. The types of state activity based on this set of overarching values or beliefs fulfill the legitimation function of the capitalist state.[12]

Each of the forms of state intervention practised by the state in the different phases of capitalist development was legitimated by its own set of overarching beliefs and values. Mercantilist doctrine was based on a theory of national development which identified military power and economic wealth. For the mercantilists, economic wealth was an absolutely essential means to power, whereas power, in turn, was valuable as a means to the acquisition or retention of wealth. On this basis wealth and power were both regarded as proper ends of national economic policy and there was further deemed to be an essential harmony between those two ends.[13] As such, mercantilism provided an unquestionable justification for the expansionist policies of colonial settlement and commercial wars which marked the period of the development of capitalism, especially in England, from the mid-seventeenth century through to the end of the eighteenth century. Liberalism, on the other hand, provided a diametrically opposed set of values to legitimate the elevation of the

market as the dominant organizing principle of nineteenth century society. Economic liberalism became an almost religious faith in the economic and social benefits that could be gained from the unimpeded operation of the self-regulating market, and as such provided a supreme justification for the systematic dismantling of every aspect of the mercantilist policies of the earlier epoch and the creation of the laissez-faire state.[14]

The relationship between the accumulation and legitimation functions of the state in the final period under discussion, that of advanced capitalism, represents a fundamental break with the two earlier periods. Under both the mercantilist and liberal phases of state intervention an essential unity prevailed between the two economic functions of the state. In contrast, the forms of state intervention in the period of advanced capitalism are marked by a disjuncture between the accumulation and legitimation functions of the state directly attributable to the alteration in the political balance of class forces coincident with the development of liberal democratic political institutions.

The political conditions necessary for the creation and expansion of a capitalist market economy, namely, the legal freedom and formal equality of all possessors of property, created the preconditions for the extension of this formal equality to the arena of politics. These conditions contained within themselves a contradiction between the formal equality and rationality necessary for the free exchange of commodities and the inevitable growth of class differences and political inequality. This contradiction, in turn, generated the political demand on the part of the disenfranchised classes of nineteenth century political society for the extension of formal equality from the spheres of law and economics into that of politics as well. Thus, out of the specific political conditions created by the capitalist mode of production emerged liberal-democratic institutions.[15]

The emergence of liberal democratic political institutions was accompanied by the growth of another institution essential to an understanding of the relations between capitalist society and the capitalist state, namely the mass political party. The growth of mass political parties with the extension of the franchise in late nineteenth century Britain and in other capitalist countries, provided the means whereby the newly enfranchised social classes could be integrated into the political process of capitalist society, while simultaneously exerting a new level of influence on the direction and content of the policies adopted by the governments of those states. In this sense, mass political parties embody some of the central contradictions of liberal democratic political institutions; on the one hand they have served to institutionalize the previously violent and disruptive political conflict between social classes in a non-violent direction, and on the other they have provided a concrete mechanism whereby the subordinate social classes could fundamentally alter the nature of state policies.[16]

FORMS OF STATE INTERVENTION

The rise of mass political parties has been viewed in extremely contradictory ways. Some observers have argued that the expansion of the base of political parties to include members of the working class and even the development of labour and socialist parties based on the working class had the effect of incorporating the members of the subordinate class into the political system that perpetrates their subordination. In this view the modern party system has been the means by which universal political equality has been reconciled with the maintenance of a society based on unequal class divisions.[17] While there is some truth to this point of view, it only partially analyses the effects of the extension of the franchise and the formation of working class based parties in the modern state. In addition to providing the mechanisms for the incorporation of the working class into the existing institutional arrangements of capitalist society, the participation by working class parties in the democratic electoral process also provided the political means whereby the members of the subordinate classes could exploit the institutional structures of the capitalist state to effect substantial social and economic reforms. Not by accident have most social democratic political parties chosen to follow this political path, for it is

> . . . precisely because workers are exploited as immediate producers and precisely because elections are within limits instrumental toward the satisfaction of their short term material interests, all socialist parties either enter into electoral struggles or lose their supporters . . . For workers the only way to obtain immediate benefits is to utilize the opportunity provided by bourgeois political institutions regardless of how limited that opportunity might be.[18]

In this sense, the modern party system has played a somewhat contradictory role in serving both to reconcile working class discontent with the inequities of existing social arrangements while providing the means through which the grossest of those inequities could be alleviated. Thus modern political parties have provided an important mechanism whereby change in the political balance of class forces in capitalist society have been reflected in the substantial expansion of the legitimation function of the state.

In advanced capitalist society the legitimation function of the state is performed through the adoption of a host of policies whose specific purpose is to maintain social harmony. These policies include ones designed to compensate the poor and the unemployed, the most obvious victims of the unimpeded operation of the market in the earlier period of liberal capitalism.

Thus under advanced capitalism, the economic ideals of social welfare and full employment perform the legitimation function of the state by securing the loyalty of the democratically enfranchised mass electorate to the existing mode of production. However, to the extent that the economic ideals of social welfare and full employment undermine the social conditions necessary for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production, an underlying conflict between the two functions of the state has emerged.

The formal assumption by the state of responsibility for minimizing the most drastic economic consequences of the accumulation process has meant that the state has transformed the question of the distribution of the social product from an essentially economic question into a political one. While the conflict between the direct producers and the appropriators of the surplus product is primarily determined by the organization of the means of production, the assumption by the state of formal responsibility for stabilizing the overall level of activity in the economy and the economic returns to participants in the economy has resulted in an increasing displacement of that conflict from the level of the economy to that of the state, or a "repoliticization of the relations of production."[19]

The Changing Forms of State Intervention

The utility of the distinctions drawn between the three different forms of state intervention and the changing nature of the economic functions of the state can only be demonstrated with reference to concrete historical experience. In the following discussion the case of Britain has been chosen in order to examine the way in which these concepts can be applied. Britain is not taken to be typical of the pattern of capitalist economic and political development. No completely typical case of the model suggested above exists given that all theoretical formulations involve abstractions and simplifications from concrete historical examples. Britain is taken as a prototype of the changing economic role of the capitalist state largely because it developed the first capitalist economy. Britain's uniqueness had two important consequences. In the first place, it established the pattern of development that other capitalist nations were to attempt to reproduce, even if the manner in which they did so differed fundamentally from the way in which capitalism developed in Britain. Secondly, largely because it was the first capitalist economy, Britain was the only country to attempt to adopt fully a consistent liberal form of state intervention. Although liberal economic ideology came to play an important role throughout all capitalist societies, only in Britain did it ever truly become the guiding principle behind the economic role of the state.

FORMS OF STATE INTERVENTION

Mercantilism and the Emergence of Capitalism

Out of the English Civil War emerged a form of political system that proved to be highly conducive to the emergence of capitalism. The development of a state structure controlled by the commercialized gentry, based on the representative forms of Parliamentary government and closely allied with the rising class of merchant and commercial capitalists, led to the adoption of a series of integrated mercantilist policies which hastened the maturation of capitalist social relations of production. This integrated series of policies included the passage of the Navigation Acts; the aggressive pursuit of an expansionary colonial policy; the elaboration of a system of taxation that simultaneously produced the revenue required for the financing of colonial wars and provided a rising level of protection to Britain's infant manufacturing industries; the establishment of national monetary institutions and the use of the public debt both to finance the state's activities and to promote the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the capitalists; and finally, the vigorous use of state power to dispossess the peasantry and thus artificially create the landless proletariat that was to provide the necessary labour force for the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth century. This integrated mercantilist system, Marx argued, was the basis of the process of primitive accumulation necessary for the extended reproduction of the capitalist mode of production:

> In England at the end of the 17th century, they (the different momenta of primitive accumulation) arrive at a systematical combination, embracing the colonies, the national debt, the modern mode of taxation, and the protectionist system. These methods depend in part on brute force, e.g., the colonial system. But they all employ the power of the State, the concentrated and organised force of society, to hasten, hothouse fashion, the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition.[20]

Nowhere can the substance of the mercantilist system of Britain be seen more clearly than in the Navigation Acts passed shortly after the end of the Civil War. They marked the transition from a mercantilist policy based on the total integration of the country's trade into a national monopoly with the state playing the principal role of organizing and maintaining the monopoly on behalf of the national trading interests. The Navigation Acts allowed British merchants to buy British and colonial exports at low costs and sell them at inflated prices in Britain. Coupled with the consistent application of British

naval and military power to defeat prospective commercial competitors, first the Dutch and later the French, the colonial system built up through the use of the Navigation Acts and the prosecution of commercial wars resulted in the creation for Britain of a virtual monopoly of overseas colonies among the various European powers.[21]

A related aspect of the mercantilist system developed in Britain after the Civil War was the rapid expansion of the system of customs duties. In direct response to the immensely expanded costs of prosecuting the commercial wars against the Dutch and French, customs duties began to rise in the 1690s, and in the period from 1690 to 1704 the general level of duty on imports was nearly quadrupled. Very little evidence exists that this initial rise was prompted by considerations of protection for British manufacturing, but its economic effects quickly produced an awareness of the implications of this aspect of the customs duties. By the early eighteenth century the higher level of customs duties began to produce strong pressure from manufacturers in favour of concessions, particularly on inputs into the manufacturing process. The major tariff reform of 1722 recognized these pressures by granting concessions on some manufacturing inputs. Throughout the eighteenth century the overall level of protection was gradually increased. The rapidly expanding system of customs duties provided the vital revenues needed to maintain the British military forces, to prosecute the numerous colonial wars, and at the same time, to provide an increasing degree of effective protection for the rising manufacturing industries at home. The complementary nature of these two aspects of the customs duties was important to the viability of the mercantile system:

> If protection and revenue needs had ever clashed very seriously, it is by no means certain which would have won; but with the exception of the largely politically inspired prohibitive duties on trade with France, none of the special protective measures very seriously affected the revenue. Industrial protection was, on the whole, a side effect of the raising of revenue; it was secured alongside, not in conflict with, the success of fiscal policy.[22]

Another important development in the late seventeenth century was the creation of the Bank of England. It linked the mobilization of financial resources for government purposes and the use of the National Debt as a lever of accumulation. Founded in 1694 on the basis of a joint stock company by the approval of Parliament, the Bank quickly became the main source of government loans. In addition to an original loan to the government which

was the basis for its establishment, the Bank of England began to make sizeable cash advances to the government and became increasingly important in mobilizing resources from all over the country. After 1709, the Bank of England became associated with the issuing of Exchequer bills as well. The development of an integrated fiscal system of taxation, national credit, and currency in the late seventeenth century under the centralized control of Parliament provided an additional means of redistributing income into the hands of the accumulating class in British society:

> The new fiscal system helped the accumulation and concentration of capital. The Bank of England lent money to the government at eight per cent, and was empowered to print bank notes which circulated as currency. Payment of interest on the National Debt, guaranteed by Parliament, necessitated heavy taxes, which transferred wealth from the poorer and landed to the monied classes.[23]

Over the course of the latter half of the eighteenth century, the conditions necessary for the emergence of industrial capitalism were further created, as landlords intensified the commercialization of agriculture with the passage of a large number of enclosure bills through Parliament. In a Parliament consistently dominated by the landed gentry, 4,100 enclosure acts were passed between 1719 and 1845, with the vast majority coming around the turn of the century. The growth of the enclosure movement was merely the most visible aspect of a general trend throughout the countryside towards the increasing concentration of landownership in large commercially run estates.[24] While the enclosure movement is often associated with the process of capitalist industrialization, and it is assumed that the dispossessed labourers were absorbed into the expanding industrial labour force, the two developments did not occur simultaneously and necessarily a great deal of hardship and misery was experienced in the process.

The most obvious indication of the social dislocation caused in the countryside by the effects of the enclosure movement was the introduction of the Speenhamland system. It represented a last desperate attempt on the part of the rural authorities responsible for the administration of the traditional Elizabethan system of relief to maintain the rural social order in the face of the rapidly expanding free market in labour. Originating with a decision of the justices of Berkshire in 1795 to grant subsidies in aid of wages to the poor based on the price of corn, and formally ratified by Parliament the following year, the actual results of Speenhamland are generally conceded to have been

disastrous. In effect all the local ratepayers subsidized the larger farmers who were more easily enabled to pay low wages, while it immobilised the rural labourers who could expect to be supported at the subsistence level in their own parish, but nowhere else.

> The best that can be said for it is that, since industry could not yet absorb the rural surplus, something had to be done to maintain them in the village. But the significance of Speenhamland was social rather than economic. It was an attempt — a last, inefficient, ill-considered and unsuccessful attempt — to maintain a traditional rural order in the face of a market economy. [25]

The main features of the mercantile system just outlined constituted a comprehensive form of economic intervention by the state to both promote the accumulation of capital in the hands of a growing commercial and industrial capitalist class and to foster the commercialization of agriculture, thus creating the landless labour force which was indispensible to the process of industrialization. The theories and ideas of mercantilism gave both a systematic form and provided an overarching pattern of legitimation for this type of state intervention. Furthermore, it served as a unifying symbol around which the dominant and rising classes of British society could unite in the pursuit of a common goal. The ideals of mercantilism united the ruling landed interests represented by the Whig gentry with the merchants, financiers and manufacturers of the emerging capitalist mode of production:

> The politics of the middle decades of the eighteenth century . . . presupposed a wide consensus within the active political community. Almost without question, the members of that community accepted not only the aristocratic order and the balanced constitution, but also the mercantile system. Indeed, the ideology of mercantilism had as great a hold upon the age as free trade came to have on the nineteenth century. Hence, although members of the landed interest held the commanding heights of political power, this did not mean that the claims of commerce were neglected. On the contrary, in their minds, as in the minds of the other great interests, commerce was "the dominant factor" in the existence and well-being of Britain. The self-interest of group and faction was conditioned by this wide

> agreement on the economic and social order. So
> conditioned it could be freely pursued without danger to
> that order[26]

The ideological unity provided by the theories of mercantilism thus operated to legitimate the form of intervention of the British state in this period of the emergence of the capitalist mode of production.

Liberalism and Competitive Capitalism

The cohesion of the upper classes in British society began to crack in the early nineteenth century at exactly the same time that mercantilism, under increasingly severe attacks from the liberal successors of Adam Smith, began to lose much of its legitimating value. The political manifestation of these changes was the increasing pressure exerted by the new industrial middle class for electoral reform. Together, three elements — dissatisfaction with the system of political representation, criticism of the ideology of mercantilism, and unrest over the economic restraints imposed on the economy by the mercantilist system — came under attack in a social revolution whose implications were to be as profound as those of the revolutionary period from 1641 to 1688. The fundamental political and economic changes in Britain from 1832 to 1849 marked the ideological triumph of liberalism. This phase of liberal economic policies has frequently been interpreted as involving the withdrawal of the state from economic intervention, and even further, as evidence that the liberal state was a 'weak' one. This interpretation fails to recognize the point that liberalism was the form of state economic intervention specific to the competitive phase of the capitalist mode of production, just as mercantilism had been the form of state economic intervention specific to the phase of the primitive accumulation of capital. The British state in the nineteenth century was one whose political and economic power was virtually unassailable, either abroad or at home. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars British commercial and industrial supremacy in the international economy had clearly been established. The ultimate success of laissez-faire as an economic policy was based on the fact that Britain could use her significant industrial advantage to undersell any other competitor in the world market and her naval power to maintain access to world markets. The international and domestic strength of the British state allowed it to systematically dismantle the mercantilist apparatus, once its purpose had been achieved, and to introduce laissez-faire in its place. The dismantling of the mercantilist system required as great a degree of 'intervention' as had its creation in the first place. "The road to the free market was opened and kept open by an enormous increase in continuous, centrally organized and controlled interventionism."[27]

The triumph of liberalism as the guiding force of the British state resulted from the increased influence of the industrial manufacturing class which pressed for the reform of Parliament and the electoral machinery to give it a degree of political power consonant with its economic and social power. The first significant indication of its increased power was the passage of the First Reform Act of 1832. The passage of the Reform Act gave the industrial middle class a degree of direct influence in the governing institutions of the country and opened the way for a frontal attack on the bulwarks of mercantilism.[28] The 'creation' of the laissez-faire state was accomplished through four major steps: the passage of the New Poor Law in 1834, the passage of the Bank Act in 1844, the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849.

The Poor Law Reform of 1834 began with the abolition of the Speenhanland system and the discontinuation of aid-in-wages. Under its provisions no future outdoor relief was to be made available and the poor were left with the free choice of destitution on their own or resort to a workhouse institutionally designed to discourage this choice as much as possible. The new Poor Law was designed to act as a not-so-subtle prod ensuring that the majority of the labouring poor had no recourse but to remain in the labour market and sell their labour power as a 'free commodity' at whatever price the market dictated. In T.H. Marshall's formulation, the Poor Law Reform created an absolutely rigid distinction between the civil and political rights of citizenship on the one hand and the social rights of citizenship on the other hand. Under the new Poor Law, only by renouncing all rights to citizenship in the first two aspects could an individual make any claim to citizenship in the third aspect. The Poor Law was the first clear announcement that in the liberal state, the market was to reign supreme, sanctioned and supported by the full weight that the state could bring to bear on its citizens.[29]

The second important piece of legislation in the creation of the liberal state was the Bank Charter Act passed in 1844. The Bank Charter Act enshrined the principles of laissez-faire at the centre of the nation's monetary and banking system. It instituted a strict separation between the Bank of England's currency and banking functions. It concentrated control over note issue in the hands of the Bank of England, thus ensuring its domination of the nation's credit system. Furthermore, it enshrined the principle that the amount of note issue in the economy should be a direct reflection of the country's gold currency reserve. Monetary policy was thus tied automatically to the fluctuations in the economy; the trade balance and the principles of laissez-faire were extended to another essential aspect of the economy. However, the Bank Act also illustrates clearly the contradictory relationship between the principles of laissez-faire and the role of the state. The Bank Act simultaneously provided for the direction of monetary policy on a non-

discretionary basis, but only by extending the power of the state in its direct control of the nation's monetary system and by greatly centralizing control of the monetary system in the hands of the Bank of England. Laissez-faire may have been the goal, but it could only be achieved through increasing state intervention.[30]

The systematic dismantling of the protectionist system in the late 1840s signalled the final arrival of the liberal state. The key struggle in this final stage centred around the repeal of the Corn Laws. The corn bounty was introduced in the seventeenth century to serve a dual purpose: to help strengthen the export position of Britain's dynamic agricultural sector and to ease the burden on the landed gentry of the land taxes. By the late eighteenth century the Corn Laws had become something of an anomaly, as the share of agriculture in the Gross National Product had declined significantly and Britain had become a net importer of corn except in years of exceptional harvests. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars the bounties on corn were abandoned altogether and in 1815 the sliding scale of duties which allowed the imports of corn to vary with the price was replaced by an absolute prohibition on the import of corn up to a certain price level. With this change, the Corn Laws became the most obvious piece of legislation specifically protecting the interests of Britain's landed gentry and a major bone of contention with both the industrial manufacturers and the growing industrial working class, consistently keeping the price of food artificially high and depressing the level of real wages.

The conflict was highlighted at the political level with the establishment of the Anti-Corn Law League in 1838 in Manchester. The decision by the League to contest the issue in elections in 1841 represented the first significant turning point at which the democratic electoral process became the centre of class conflicts over the direction and content of the state's interventionist role. With the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846, the liberal forces of the industrial middle class gained their most significant victory. The victory was further consolidated with the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849 and the eventual abandonment of colonial preferences in the 1850s. With these developments, the liberal forces of the rising middle class had triumphed and the power of the state had been systematically turned to erase all vestiges of the mercantilist system the chief beneficiaries of which had been the members of that same middle class.[31]

A complementary aspect of the liberal state was the limited fiscal role of the government in the economy. Fiscal liberalism was as distinctly a product of the peculiar military and economic position of Britain in the nineteenth century as was free trade and an automatic monetary system tied to the gold standard. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the military and commercial supremacy achieved by Britain obviated the need for the heavy military expenditures that had placed the greatest strain on the country's fiscal

resources throughout the bellicose eighteenth century. The military as well as commercial dominance of Britain in the nineteenth century created the necessary preconditions for the introduction of free trade, since the virtual elimination of the customs duties which took place in this period would have been unthinkable had the constraints imposed on the government's budget by military expenditures been more severe. The reduction of customs duties was begun in 1845 and continued throughout the 1850's until they were virtually eliminated in the budget of 1860. The basis for the observance of Gladstone's principles of fiscal liberalism was established firmly. The fiscal liberalism of the nineteenth century was thus the budgetary manifestation of British commercial and military dominance and the perfect complement to free trade and the laissez-faire state.[32]

The victory of the industrial middle class, symbolized by the advent of free trade, had been achieved with the temporary support of the emerging working class in spite of alternative movements such as Chartism competing for political and ideological hegemony. However, by creating the laissez-faire conditions for the absolute dominance of industrial capitalism, the triumph of the middle class also created the conditions for the rapid expansion of the subordinate class in the capitalist mode of production, the industrial workers. The triumph of the forces of liberalism in the mid-nineteenth century was accompanied almost simultaneously by a defensive reaction of the industrial working class aimed at protecting itself from the worst consequences of the unfettered operation of the capitalist market economy. The success of the industrial working class in winning certain concessions from the state resulted in the adoption of a new set of regulatory policies necessary for the maintenance of social harmony. The growing trend of regulatory legislation in the nineteenth century marked the commencement of a new form of state intervention and the first significant break between the accumulation and the legitimation functions of the state.

The passage of the Ten Hours Bill in 1847, limiting the hours of work of children from thirteen to eighteen in the textile industries to ten a day, constituted the first important victory for the industrial working class in its attempts to control the operation of the market. Over the next two decades, the provisions of the Ten Hours Bill were gradually enhanced and extended to other industries as well. At the same time, the extent to which the factory legislation actually subverted the dominance of the industrial middle class and its liberal ideology should not be overestimated. Many erstwhile liberals could justify the need for factory legislation as a necessary corrective to the unavoidable excesses of the free market system. By the 1860's some of the Bill's most virulent opponents had admitted that it had not had nearly the negative effect that they had feared and that its positive gains in terms of the acquiescence of the working class had been well worth the price.[33]

Nonetheless, the factory legislation is significant for the way in which it presaged the increasingly interventionist role which the state was to play in the control and direction of the capitalist economy.

The power of the industrial working class in the capitalist economy was extended in the 1870s and decades following with the passage of legislation giving trade unions their modern legal status and thus the power to challenge their conditions of work. Another important change in the latter half of the nineteenth century involved the extensions of the franchise in 1867 and 1884 by which all adult males were given the vote. The extension of the franchise was the product of a variety of factors. It was partly designed to win the working class to the established order by liberalizing the political system; it also indicated that Britain's political elites, who had violently opposed the democratic demands of the Chartists in the 1840s, no longer regarded the working class as a revolutionary threat. They may have been correct, but the combination of these two developments (the legalization of trade unions and the extension of the franchise) allowed for the establishment of a mass party based on this working class that was to profoundly affect the future economic role of the state.[34] These developments were followed in the 1890s by the expansion of the trade union movement from its narrow craft union basis to more broadly based industrial unions and by the formation of the Labour Party in 1900 as the political wing of the Trades Union Congress. The growth of industrial unionism and the formation of the Labour Party reflected the significant change that had taken place in the political consciousness of the British working class from concern with narrow economic issues as reflected in the agitation around the Ten Hours Bill to concern for the broad social rights of workers as a class and the effects of the industrial system on their standard of living.[35]

Although the Labour Party did not actually succeed in forming a government until the 1920s, its influence in British politics, particularly on the economic role of the state, was felt directly after the election of 1906 in which it elected 29 Members to Parliament. The numerical weight of the Labour M.P.'s was not the critical factor in the passage of the reform legislation that followed, but what was important was the growing concern for social issues and for the protection of members of society from the worst consequences of the free market. The vast array of social reforms introduced between 1905 and 1911 was the work of the so-called "new Liberals" of the late nineteenth century who regarded the extension of social rights to all members of society as an essential component of the full enjoyment of democratic rights. The specific policies introduced by the Liberals were intended to cure the most glaring inequities of poverty, thus providing all members of British society with what was felt to be the basic minimum social standing to participate fully in its democratic institutions. This programme was a far cry from the

philosophy of liberalism which had underlain the Poor Law Amendment of 1834, reflecting the extent to which the ideological and political representatives of the working class had made their presence felt in Britain's political life. The Liberal reforms included: the Old Age Pension Bill of 1908, which provided for direct payments from national funds to those over seventy whose income did not exceed a certain maximum yearly amount; the introduction of Labour Exchanges in 1909 to aid in the alleviation of unemployment; the passage of the National Unemployment and Health Insurance Acts in 1911; and the famous budget of 1909 that financed these reforms by imposing a graduated income tax with a 'supertax' on upper income levels and by levying land value duties on unearned increments gained in the sale of land. The scope and content of the reforms passed in these years were far-reaching. However, they were introduced with a view to alleviating existing social conditions without altering the underlying foundations of the free market itself, rather than solving the problem by doing away with the entire system.[36] It is in this sense that these reforms can be said to constitute the basis of the policies that perform the legitimation function of the advanced capitalist state.

The expansion of the state's legitimation function in this period was matched by an equally substantial transformation of its accumulation function. The change which occurred in the accumulation function was a product of both the changing nature of Britain's position in the international capitalist economy and the changing nature of capitalist enterprise in Britain. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the industrial pre-eminence of Britain among the advanced capitalist states, which had been the precondition for the liberal form of state intervention, began to fade as other capitalist countries, particularly Germany and the United States, industrialized at a rapid rate. In many cases, the more sophisticated capital equipment installed in the new industries in these countries not only undercut Britain's competitive advantage, but put her at a serious disadvantage. The increasing international capitalist rivalry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was also marked by a growing degree of imperialist expansion. Britain's major competitors were not unaware of the important advantages it had gained from its substantial empire and attempted in these years to claim for themselves colonies and spheres of influence in the underdeveloped parts of the world. The growth of inter-imperialist rivalry was another cause of the decline of the liberal state. The growing naval rivalry with Germany in the 1890s occasioned massive increases in budgetary expenditures to rearm the navy and did much to undermine the principles of Gladstonian fiscal policy. The increases in income taxes as well as other severe measures contained in the Liberal budget of 1909 were necessitated by the rising costs of naval expenditures as much as by the increased welfare expenditures.[37]

As the degree of competition in the international capitalist economy intensified in the late nineteenth century many of the conditions required for the maintenance of a laissez-faire competitive economy in Britain disintegrated. The increasing degree of international competition resulted in a growing trend towards industrial concentration in Britain, as firms, especially in the new industries of the second industrial revolution, were forced to amalgamate in order to achieve the greater economies of scale. Although Britain had one of the least concentrated of the major industrial economies before World War I, she had one of the most by the start of the Second World War.

In the interwar period the devastating effects of the collapse of the international capitalist economy and the rise of autarky forced a final abandonment of any pretence towards liberalism on the part of the British state. These years witnessed a growing effort on the part of governments to reduce competition in the British economy by promoting mergers and combinations. In the period between the two wars the British government played an instrumental role in bringing about the amalgamation of the railways, the concentration and partial nationalization of electricity supply, the creation of a monopoly in the iron and steel industry and a national coal cartel and the merger of all existing civil aviation companies into a subsidized public corporation. The final blow which the Depression struck against the laissez-faire state came with the abandonment of both the Gold Standard and Free Trade in 1931. Free Trade had, of course long since become a luxury which British industry, given the decline in its competitive advantage, could barely afford. The extreme conditions of the 1930s and the rise in levels of international tariff protection finally forced the British government to follow suit. In turn, the rise of protection supported both the government and private initiatives towards greater concentration in the economy.[38] By the end of the Depression, the state had begun to assume the increasingly interventionist role in the promotion of capital accumulation that is a key feature of advanced capitalism. This change in the nature of the state's accumulation role was the product of two simultaneous processes: the rise of competition in the international market that made the traditional policy of Free Trade obsolete and the internal trend towards greater industrial concentration.

Keynesianism and Advanced Capitalism

While the principles of liberalism became increasingly irrelevant as a guide to government policy with respect to industrial organization and tariff protection, they continued to retain a strong hold over the academic economists and over government thinking in the determination of fiscal policy. Throughout the Depression British governments strongly resisted

demands for the generation of public works projects and other budgetary expenditures to alleviate unemployment. They clung steadfastly to the orthodox Gladstonian principles of balanced budgeting, and in the early years of the 1930s when the Depression was at its peak, the government succeeded in maintaining a balanced budget by cutting back on expenditures and raising taxes. This last remaining stronghold of liberalism came under increasing attack during these years in the work of John Maynard Keynes, who was motivated by the same concern as the 'new Liberals' to maintain the viability of the existing economic system through selective government intervention.

Keynes analysed the causes of the Depression in terms of a lack of investment and a falling level of demand. The crux of Keynes's theoretical insights focused on the relationship between savings and investment behaviour and their implications for income determination and effective demand. He argued that in conditions of heavy unemployment, the greatest danger lay in an abstinence from spending by governments and the general public which would produce a reduction in the general level of income. The threat of inadequate investment at the level of the national economy required government fiscal policy to ensure that available savings in the economy were used to generate productive investments. Keynes's influence over the determination of fiscal policy increased significantly with his appointment as a special advisor to the Treasury during World War II. From 1940 on, Britain's wartime fiscal policy revealed a markedly Keynesian orientation in its attempt to coordinate the overall level of economic activity with the goals of the war effort through the use of various budgetary devices.[39]

The significance of Keynes's thinking extends far beyond the increased importance it attached to budgetary policy in the economic role of the state. The general acceptance of Keynesian thinking and the formal responsibility of the state for stabilizing the level of economic activity which was announced in the White Paper on Employment Policy in 1944 signalled the end of an old era of state intervention and ushered in a new one. In the years before World War II, the British state has shown itself increasingly willing to abandon the precepts of liberalism in practice in order to achieve a specific desirable goal, but it had never been willing to acknowledge the obsolescence of liberalism as a comprehensive guide to government intervention. Before Keynes, the ideological alternative to liberalism was viewed primarily as socialism. While the "new Liberals" could justify a limited degree of social welfare on the basis of democratic principles and conservative governments could justify intervention to promote industrial reorganization as a limited and necessary aid to industry, these moves were generally viewed as exceptions to the liberal model rather than new departures. Keynes's economic theories provided a theoretical justification for a new degree of massive and continuous state intervention viewed not as an attack on the private accumulation of capital but as a necessary adjunct to it.

Keynes's contribution to the transformed economic role of the state in advanced capitalism also provided a theoretical justification for the expanded range of welfare policies and for the political commitment to the maintenance of full employment that the state was forced to undertake during the war. The need for total economic mobilization and for the political support of the Labour Party behind the war effort forced the British government to address seriously some of the questions which it had successfully avoided throughout much of the Depression, in particular, the adequacy of the welfare system and the responsibility of the government to the unemployed. As Richard Titmuss has pointed out, there is an increasingly important link between the development of social policy and the waging of modern warfare:

> The waging of modern war presupposes and imposes a great increase in social discipline; moreover, this discipline is only tolerable if — and only if — social inequalities are not intolerable .... The aims and content of social policy, both in peace and in war, are thus determined — at least to a substantial extent — by how far the cooperation of the masses is essential to the successful prosecution of the war. If this co-operation is thought to be essential, then the inequalities must be reduced and the pyramid of social stratification must be flattened.[40]

The Beveridge Report of 1942 on Social Insurance and Allied Services (the blueprint for the establishment of the postwar Labour government's welfare state) and the White Paper of 1944 on Employment Policy were the commitment made by the wartime government to the expansion of social welfare in order to maintain the legitimacy of the existing economic order. The expansion of welfare services and the commitment to full employment became the basis of what has been termed the postwar settlement between capital and labour. As such, the introduction of these policies did not represent a victory of the subordinate classes over the dominant social class in British society, but rather, reforms of the existing social order. While leaving untouched the fundamental nature of the capitalist mode of production, within its limits the reforms constituted material social and economic gains for the working class.[41]

The political commitment to a policy of full employment made in the final years of World War II thus symbolized more clearly than any other policy the essential nature of state intervention in the advanced capitalist economy. The basic consequence of increased state intervention in the postwar economy has

been to reduce the risks and consequences of the unimpeded operation of the market for both capital and labour. Through a full employment policy designed to guarantee a high and stable level of aggregate demand, in conjunction with a host of tax incentives and other policies designed to subsidize the costs of capital, state intervention has helped to reduce the uncertainty which large oligopolistic corporations face in the market. Simultaneously, through a full employment policy, as well as other policies designed to protect members of the labour force against the ill effects of the temporary loss of income from unemployment, the state has reduced the private costs of the operation of the labour market previously borne by individual workers. The dual role which full employment policy plays in this respect thus corresponds directly to the two basic economic functions of the state — the accumulation and the legitimation function.

Paradoxically, however, the comparative success of the advanced capitalist state in implementing full employment policies throughout the postwar period has planted the seeds of its most unresolvable problem. After several decades of relative full employment in the British and other advanced capitalist economies, the central problem became not that of chronic unemployment, but rather, persistent inflation. The emergence of this trend towards a steady increase in the secular rate of inflation was anticipated by some of the economists in wartime Britain who appreciated the full significance of the Keynesian theory that the general price level in a capitalist economy is primarily determined by the overall level of money-wage rates. As Joan Robinson has observed,

> The proposition that, in an industrial economy, the level of money-wage rates governs the level of prices was an essential element of Keynes' *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* published in 1936. The part of his argument which concerned the need for government policy to maintain 'a high and stable level of employment' was accepted into the canon of received orthodoxy ... even before the end of the war in 1945, but the part which concerned wages and prices was resisted much longer. It was easy to predict that if we stumbled into near full employment with institutions and attitudes unchanged, the balance of power in wage-bargaining would tip in favour of the workers, so that a vicious spiral of wages and prices would become chronic.[42]

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The political implications of Keynesian full employment policies were also pointed out in a somewhat prophetic article written by Michal Kalecki in 1943. Kalecki predicted that in such a situation, capitalists would recognize that the disciplinary role played by the unemployed in the labour market would lose its impact. Loss of the fear of unemployment would prompt workers and trade unions to adopt a more militant and intransigent attitude in their wage negotiations with the capitalists. Although the capitalists would recognize that full employment was beneficial in terms of providing them with continuously profitable investment prospects, they were more appreciative of the importance of "discipline in the factories" and "political stability". Kalecki argued "their class instinct tells them that lasting full employment is unsound from their point of view and that unemployment is an integral part of the normal capitalist system."[43] On the other hand, Kalecki also foresaw that in slump conditions the pressure of the masses would likely force the government to undertake public investment schemes financed through borrowing. Such action is what has in fact occurred.

Throughout the postwar period, governments in the major advanced capitalist countries have been subjected to conflicting pressures from capital and labour to utilize fiscal policy for the maximum benefit of each. Wage earners and members of the organized labour movement have demonstrated a consistent unwillingness to tolerate governments that would not do all they could to maintain a high level of employment. The enhanced bargaining power which labour has enjoyed throughout the postwar period can be attributed in substantial measure to the impact of the fiscal stabilization policies resulting from that political pressure. At the same time, the emergence of inflation as the central economic problem of the postwar era has been the product of the efforts of the trade unions to use their bargaining power to improve money wage levels. The success of wage earners in translating money wage increases into real wage increases has been undermined by the ability of firms (particularly the larger, oligopolistic ones) to raise their prices in order to maintain profit margins. This competitive struggle between organized wage labourers and large oligopolistic firms to redistribute real income towards wages or profits lies at the root of the contemporary inflationary phenomenon.[44]

The result of increased state intervention in the economy, principally through the adoption of Keynesian stabilization policies, has been to alter dramatically the nature of the historical confrontation between capital and labour. To the extent that the implementation of full employment policies has undermined the traditional role that the fear of unemployment played in maintaining wage discipline, it has improved the relative bargaining power of labour and contributed to the persistence of inflation. In reaction to this development, growing numbers of business spokesmen and conservative economists have rejected the Keynesian policy prescriptions over the past two

decades, initially in favour of wage and price controls, and more recently in support of the restrictive economic policies of the monetarists. The growing response to the neo-conservative call for the need to redress the bias in state intervention away from labour and in favour of capital represents a significant attempt to undermine the important political compromise which was instituted as part of the postwar settlement. However, as Robert Keohane has perceptively argued, the adherents of this perspective have been better at analysing the sources of the current dilemma than at suggesting solutions to overcome it:

> Their optimism about the ability of governments to pursue disciplined internal policies is questionable. If they are correct, disciplinary states are necessary for the prosperity of capitalism, but such states are unlikely to be established democratically . . . . In some countries, democratic institutions and modern capitalism may be compatible; but there is no guarantee that this will be the case everywhere. In the short run, one can expect a continuation of current patterns of uneven development: strong economies . . . will become stronger relative to the weaker ones . . . . In the longer run, political upheaval and crisis may occur in several countries.[45]

Conclusion

The growing politicization of the relations between capital and labour in advanced capitalist society has thus resulted in a situation in which it is increasingly difficult for the state to perform simultaneously its accumulation and legitimation functions. The current impasse which the state faces in this regard is in many ways a reflection of the relative balance of political class forces and the tensions among liberal democratic institutions in advanced capitalist society. The relatively stagnant levels of economic activity in many advanced capitalist countries in recent years, combining both low levels of profitability and growth with high levels of inflation and unemployment, suggest that the political limits of the Keynesian compromise may have been reached. The growing failure of the Keynesian prescription to provide the policy means by which the advanced capitalist state can continue to perform simultaneously its accumulation and legitimation function also indicates that the terms of the postwar settlement between capital and labour have begun to break down. The increased attempts by labour and other wage earners to utilize their political bargaining power to redistribute a greater degree of the

product of the production process to themselves has placed increasing pressure on the profitability and competitiveness of capitalist firms, thus undermining the ability of the state to perform successfully its accumulation function. At the same time increased pressure on the state from business interests to adopt economic policies tolerating higher levels of unemployment, or to impose wage controls, have intensified the legitimation problems faced by the state. The dilemma posed by the growing contradiction between the performance of the two economic functions of the state in advanced capitalism lies at the root of the central problem for state intervention in the capitalist economy of the present era.

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Notes

1. Claus Offe, "The Separation of Form and Content in Liberal Democratic Politics," *Studies in Political Economy*, no. 3 (Spring 1980), pp 5-6.

2. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of our Time*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1957, p. 130.

3. Claus Offe, "Introduction to Part III: Legitimacy vs. Efficiency," in *Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism*, ed. Leon N. Lindberg et al., Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1975, p. 249.

4. Offe, "The Separation of Form and Content," p. 7 Some of the more important writings on this subject include Michel J. Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, New York: New York University Press, 1975; Robert Nisbet, *Twilight of Authority*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1975; Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, New York: Basic Books, 1976; Samuel Brittan, *The Economic Consequences of Democracy*, London: Temple Smith, 1977; Irving Kristol, *Two Cheers for Capitalism*, New York: Basic Books, 1978.

5. Ian Gough, "State Expenditure in Advanced Capitalism," *New Left Review*, no. 92 (July-August 1975), p. 69.

6. Robert O. Keohane, "Economics, Inflation and the Role of the State: Political Implications of the McCracken Report," review of *Towards Full Employment and Price Stability*, by Paul McCracken et al. *World Politics* 31 (October 1978), p. 122.

7. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, New York: Bedminister Press, 1968, p. 54. Although this particular definition of the state originates with Weber, it has also been applied by a number of Marxist writers on the subject. Cf. Harold Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice* London: George

Allen and Unwin, 1935, p. 21. Compare this with the definition of the state used by Hal Draper.

> The state is the institution, or complex of institutions, which bases itself on the availability of forcible coercion by special agencies of society in order to maintain the dominance of a ruling class, preserve existing property relations from basic change, and keep all other classes in subjection. *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, vol. I: *State and Bureaucracy*, New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1977, p. 251.

8. Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London: New Left Books, 1975, pp. 14-24.

9. The use of this term is derived from the work of James O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973, p. 6; and Claus Offe, "The Abolition of Market Control and the Problem of Legitimacy (I)," *Kapitalstate: Working Papers on the Capitalist State*, no. 1 (1973); p. 111. In using the concept of functions to analyse the economic role of the state in capitalist society, an important qualification pointed out by Ian Gough must be noted.

> Implicit in any discussion of the state's functions is the assumption that the analysis tells us something about the determinants of state action, that the state responds to the functional requirements of capital. This is quite unjustified. The fact that some function is required for the accumulation or reproduction of capital . . . tells us nothing about whether or not the state meets those requirements or the manner in which it responds to them. This involves a study of the way these requirements are translated into political demands and policies . . . *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*, London: Macmillan, 1979, pp. 50-51.

10. A similar topology has been suggested, although from a significantly different theoretical perspective in John Holloway and Sol Picciotto, "Capital, Crisis and the State," *Capital and Class*, no. 2 (Summer 1977), pp 86-94. See also Bob Jessop, "Capitalism and Democracy: The Best Possible Political Shell?" *in Power and the State*, ed. Gary Littlejohn et al., London: Croom Helm, 1978, pp. 10-22.

11. Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. III, pp. 953-954. The concept of legitimacy is also discussed in vol. I, pp. 31-38 and 212-216. See also Claus Offe, "Introduction to Part III," p. 248. Note also the definition used by Jurgen Habermas,

> *Legitimation means a political order's worthiness to be recognized.* This definition highlights the fact that legitimacy is a contestable validity claim; the stability of the order of domination (also) depends on its (at least) de facto recognition. *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1979, p. 178.

12. The concept of legitimation function has been used by Alan Wolfe in a similar fashion to examine the justifications of different forms of state activity in the economy, albeit using a slightly different typology than is employed here. See his *The Limits of Legitimacy: Political Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism*, New York: The Free Press, 1977, pp. 9-10, 247-249.

13. Jacob Viner, "Power vs. Plenty as Objectives of Foreign Policy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Revisions in Mercantilism*, ed. D.C. Coleman, London: Methuen, 1969, p. 71; Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, London: New Left Books, 1974, pp. 36-37.

14. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, p. 135; Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1975, p. 24.

15. Draper, pp. 270-274.

16. Maurice Duverger, *Party Politics and Pressure Groups*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1972, pp. 40-76; Samuel H. Beer, *British Politics in the Collectivist Age*, New York: Vintage Books, 1969, chap. 2; San Francisco Bay Area Kapitalistate Group, "Political Parties and Capitalist Development," *Kapitalistate: Working Papers on the Capitalist State*, no. 6 (Fall 1977): 13-19.

17. C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 64-69. Note also the interesting discussion on this point by Andrew Martin in "Political Constraints on Economic Strategies in Advanced Industrial Societies," *Comparative Political Studies* 10 (October 1977): 329-330, 344-345.

18. Adam Przeworski, "Proletariat into a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Karl Kautsky's *The Class Struggle* to Recent Controversies," *Politics and Society* 7, Summer 1977, p. 379.

19. Trent Schroyer, "The Re-politicization of the Relations of Production: An Interpretation of Jurgen Habermas' Analytic Theory of Late Capitalist Development," *New German Critique*, no. 5 Spring 1975, p. 117.

20. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. I: *Capitalist Production*, ed. Frederick Engels, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970, p. 751.

21. Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution*, vol. 2 (1530-1780) of *The Pelican Economic History of Britain*, Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1969, pp. 155-160; Barry Supple, "The State and the Industrial Revolution, 1700-1914," in *The Industrial Revolution*, vol. 3 of *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, ed. Carlo M. Cipolla, Glasgow: Fontana Books, 1973, p. 315.

22. Ralph Davis, "The Rise of Protection in England, 1689-1786.", *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser. 19 (1966), p. 317.

23. Hill, p. 187; Rudolf Braun, "Taxation, Sociopolitical Structure and State-Building: Great Britain and Brandenburg-Prussia," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975, pp. 283-291.

24. E.J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire*, vol. 3 (From 1750 to the Present Day) of *The Pelican Economic History of Britain*, Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1969, pp. 101-103; Beer, p. 27.

25. Hobsbawm, pp. 104-105; Phyllis Deane, *The First Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967, pp. 143-144; Polanyi, pp. 78-97.

26. Beer, p. 32.

27. Polanyi, p. 140; Hobsbawm, pp. 226, 232.

28. The argument that the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 signified the increased political power of the industrial manufacturing class is not meant to suggest that this was followed by the direct representation of the industrial bourgeoisie in the political institutions of the country. In fact, the bourgeoisie seems to have continued to elect substantial numbers of landed aristocrats to Parliament in succeeding decades. See Perry Anderson, "Origins of the Present Crisis," *New Left Review*, no. 23 (January-February 1964),pp. 31-32.

29. T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class," in *Sociology at the Crossroads and Other Essays*, London: Heinemann, 1963, p. 83; Polanyi, pp. 101-102.

30. Polanyi, p. 139; Dean, pp. 180-184; Hobsbawm, p. 236.

31. Deane, pp. 190-210.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-188; Hobsbawm, pp. 232-235.

33. Deane, pp. 214-217; Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, pp. 278-279; J.B. Brebner, "Laissez-faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth Century Britain," in *Essays in Economic History*, vol. III, Essays

edited for the Economic History Society by E.M. Carus-Wilson, London: Edward Arnold, 1962, p. 256; Maurice Bruce, *The Coming of the Welfare State*, London: B.T. Batsford, 1968, pp. 74-79.

34. A somewhat less sanguine view of these developments is taken in Anderson, "Origins," pp. 35-37; Tom Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism*, London: New Left Books, 1977, pp. 38-44.

35. Asa Briggs, "The Welfare State in Historical Perspective," *Archives Européenes de Sociologie* 2 (1961), pp. 233-239.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 242-246; Bruce, pp. 172-220; Beer, pp. 60-61.

37. Hobsbawm, p. 239.

38. Nigel Harris, *Competition and the Corporate Society: British Conservatives, the State and Industry, 1945-1964*, London: Methuen, 1972, pp. 32-45; Hobsbawm, pp. 241-244.

39. Donald Winch, *Economics and Policy: An Historical Study*, London: Hodden and Stoughten, 1969, pp. 167-172, 204-209, 259-263.

40. Richard M. Titmuss, "War and Social Policy," in *Essays on 'The Welfare State'*, 2nd ed., London: Unwin University Books, 1963, pp. 85-86.

41. Leo Panitch, "The Development of Corporatism in Liberal Democracies," *Comparative Political Studies* 10 (April 1977), pp. 74-79; Gough, "State Expenditure in Advanced Capitalism," pp. 68-70. The reasons for the unique suitability of the social democratic Labour Government to implement the terms of the postwar settlement have been suggested in Alan Wolfe, "Has Social Democracy a Future?" *Comparative Politics* 11 (October 1978), pp. 103-106.

42. Joan Robinson, *Economics: An Awkward Corner*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967, p. 19.

43. Michal Kalecki, *Selected Essays on the Dynamics of the Capitalist Economy, 1933-1970*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971, p. 141.

44. This phenomenon of the modern capitalist economy has been analysed by Joan Robinson as the 'inflation barrier' to raising real wages or profits. See Joan Robinson and John Eatwell, *An Introduction to Modern Economics*, London: McGraw-Hill, 1973, pp. 190-191; Gough, p. 70; Aubrey Jones, *The New Inflation: The Politics of Prices and Incomes*, Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973, pp. 44-45. This is not meant to suggest that the political bargaining power of organized labour is the only cause of the inflationary phenomenon of the advanced capitalist economies; however, it certainly is a prime factor. A fuller discussion of the problem can be found in Dudley Jackson, H.A. Turner and Frank Wilkinson, *Do Trade Unions Cause Inflation? Two Studies: With a Theoretical Introduction and Policy Conclusion*, University of Cambridge Department of Applied Economics Occasional Paper 36, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

45. Keohane, "Economics, Inflation and the Role of the State," p. 123.

VAN GOGH AND IMPOSSIBILITY

Eli Mandel

Vincent Van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism, an Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario from January 24 through March 22, 1981.[1]

However one thinks of "modernism" or the "modern" in contemporary art, without question they are movements bound to the life and extraordinary work of Vincent Van Gogh. The quite remarkable exhibition shown at the AGO from January to March 1981 brilliantly focuses on Van Gogh's work in relation to one of its major developments, his association in thought and style with a group of artists during the last six years of his life; hence the title: Vincent Van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism. If Turner and the great impressionist painters, Monet, Renoir, Degas, mark the beginning of the modern style, and Cezanne — in Northrop Frye's words — "is the hinge on which turns [the] specifically 'modern' movement to a new sense of "the sheer imaginative act of painting in itself",[2] Van Gogh and his friends began the thrust to new forms of expression, the end of which we have not yet begun to understand.

Modernism is one of the primary movements in contemporary thought, not only about art but about our conception of ourselves, our limitations, our potential. One of the reasons Van Gogh has in himself become symbolic — an icon of vision, prophetic power, and madness — one suspects, is the degree to which his life and work embody the very conception of being a modern man, of living with the problem of an impossibility. The exhibition fascinates us to the degree that its articulate, brooding, passionate forms and images hurl us toward questions we still cannot answer: how to deal with visionary and criminal art. Or to use another term, equally problematic: revolutionary art.

One point of beginning might very well be the paradox that as the exhibition was collected its value increased to the point where it became almost too costly to show. A second matter has to do with the *meaning* or our *understanding* of the great portraits, the images of the human face, shown here; the third, the significance of Cloisonism itself, a formal distortion of figure and perspective, combined with new uses of colour. These questions are political, psychological, perceptual. They are questions of social history, of moral definition, of ways of seeing. And whatever structure of argument one chooses to follow, long after the arguments have been worked through, over all will remain the suffusing glow of light pouring over a landscape as if from a molten living sun, the burning eyes of a man who looks not so much through you as *into* your own living heart, asking unbearable questions, the vibrant

colours of irises and sunflowers.

The exhibition consists of "about" 145 works including oil paintings, watercolours, pastels and several large zincographs. So, at least, the official gallery news release informs us. The word "about" refers to the fact that since the exhibition consists of loans from many sources, significantly from the Rijksmuseum Van Gogh (37 works), it is difficult to arrive at a final count. The major portion is by Van Gogh and Gaugin (80 works) but 65 are by others, the post-impressionists of the Cloisonist group: Henri Toulouse — Lautrec, Emile Bernard, Louis Anquetin, Jacob Meyer de Haan, Paul Serusier, Charles Laval, and Maurice Denis. These figures became, in Van Gogh's term, the "Impressionists of the Petit Boulevard", as distinct from the older established artists, the "Impressionists of the Grand Boulevard".

In the spring of 1980, a convulsion of the international art market occurred. Prices set at two New York auctions resulted in a re-evaluation of similar works everywhere so that the value of the Van Gogh show increased alarmingly to reach at one point an estimated $250 million dollars though this figure was later somewhat scaled down. Costs rose accordingly for the showing. The point is worth considering, not simply because of the threat it posed to the exhibition, but because of its more general impact. Arguing from a Marxist point of view, John Berger notes that under capitalism, social alienation and fragmentation — the constant sense of insecurity — sets into motion the paradoxes of the romantic view of the artist; outsider and criminal, he is also "hero of societies unable to see a way out of the frustrations they inevitably encourage."[3] Paradoxically, the very conditions that destroy him invest his life — and therefore his work with which it is identified — with the incredible value denied in his existence. $250 million for poor Vincent. There are, of course, answers to Berger's line of argument. It can be argued that Van Gogh's life is demonstrably *incidental* to his work (Berger's point). Consider Van Gogh's letter to Theo, so touched with humanity as to be read only with pain and love: "Well, my own work, I am risking my life for it and my reason has half foundered because of it — that's all right."[4] His *work* transcends his *life*, exists *in spite of*, not *because* of its condition. But this Marxist humanism comes up against another interpretation. Not his social alienation (the work he does) but his madness (the embodiment of literal alienation) may be argued to be the matter. The political question becomes a psychological one.

Unfortunately or not, Van Gogh's life became the very emblem of the life of another mad artist who, in an extraordinarily brilliant essay, chose to argue a stunning case about Van Gogh's madness from a point of view the obverse of Berger's. It was not Van Gogh's madness that alienated him, but his sanity. So argued Antonin Artaud in his "Vincent Van Gogh the Man Suicided by Society" in an award winning essay written the year Artaud emerged from his nine years in French asylums and just after seeing a Van Gogh exhibition in the Orangerie in Paris. On the face of it, this position looks like a version of

Berger's view, but it turns out to be very different. Indeed, this curious issue in art history would be by the way except for two astounding matters. One I have mentioned: the political matter of the truly astonishing prices our society chooses to put on works they mythicize as insane. The second point is the curious influence of Artaud's essay. "This essay", remarks Martin Esslin in his study of Artaud,

> is above all, a furious polemic against psychiatrists and psychiatry. Part of it was published in an English translation by Peter Watson in the number of *Horizon* for January 1948. That is where R.D. Laing read it as a young student; he has since said that it came as a revelation to him and played a decisive part in his development.[5]

The same claim, though in a more guarded and qualified way, appears in Ronald Hayman's *Artaud and After*. Both Hayman and Esslin point to Artaud's (and through him Van Gogh's) influence on "thinking in our time in the field of psychology, psychoanalysis and their social applications," but from rather different points of view. Foucault, Laing, and Thomas Szaz, among others, have considered the terminology and phenomenology of madness from radical points of view. For Laing, like Artaud, the matter of the madman artist is put before us once more in a revisionist version of the poet-maudite, for it is Laing's contention that far from being incidental to his life, the artist's madness as expressed in his work is the expression of his life, the very means by which he lives. To argue, in these terms, for the paradoxical "sanity" of Van Gogh returns one to a romantic reading of his painting and necessitates the re-evaluation Berger seeks to avert. To take an example: though apparently arguing for the mutual exclusivity of art and madness, Foucault sums up the position of Artaud and not only links him with Van Gogh, Nietzsche, Holderlin and Nerval but as well with Barthes's version of the revolutionary meaning of paradoxical speech:

> The moment when, together, the work of art and madness are born and fulfilled is the beginning of time when the world finds itself arraigned by that work of art and responsible before it for what it is. Ruse and new triumph of madness: the world that thought to measure and justify madness through psychology must justify itself before madness, since in its struggles and agonies it measures itself by the excess of works like those of Nietzsche, of Van Gogh, of Artaud.[7]

There are two portraits in the exhibition that raise the same questions. One is Van Gogh's *Self-Portrait With Straw Hat* (1887); the other Gaugin's *Self-Portrait, Les Miserables*. The first elicits this commentary from Artaud:

> let him who once knew how to look at a human face take a
> look at the self-portrait of Van Gogh, I am thinking of the
> one with the soft hat. Painted by an extra-lucid Van
> Gogh, that face of a red-headed butcher, inspecting and
> watching us, scrutinizing us with a glowering eye. I do not
> know of a single psychiatrist who would know how to
> scrutinize a man's face with such overpowering strength,
> dissecting its irrefutable psychology as if with a knife.[8]

If you shudder, you have seen the painting, its flecks of blood on the face, its burning eyes, its unbearable questions. "For a lunatic is a man that society does not want to hear but wants to prevent from uttering certain unbearable truths."[9] So Artaud.

As for the other portrait, *Les Miserables*? Berger's comment is revealing and precise:

> The large lumbering body, the big hooked nose, the dark
> eyes whose expression is defensive and gives nothing
> away, the whole face — like one carved forcefully but
> with a blunt knife out of crude wood — are seen bitterly,
> cynically, as though the image Gaugin saw in a mirror of
> how a convict might strike a prison visitor, or how a man
> might appear, brought up from a dark cell for
> interrogation.[10]

The butcher. The criminal — or the Indian. Primitive. So art has come to this. It is a problem now. An unbearable question. A rejection. An affirmation, but of things we dare not say we have seen. These views are extreme, though it is worth noting they are clearly implied by the portraits themselves. Gaugin, after all, chose the title *Les Miserables* because of Jean Val Jean, the criminal as a type of an artist. He chose too a symbolist technique, "the colour . . . pretty far from nature . . . all the reds and violets streaked by flames like a furnace radiating from the eyes, seat of the struggles of the painter's thought . . ." And the flesh, as Van Gogh saw it, "a dismal blue". Bernard's painting of himself, included in the upper right corner, shows the painter with his eyes — significantly — shut to all exterior reality.[11] But a third view possible as between revolutionary (Berger's view) or madman

(Artaud's), is suggested by Orwell's remarkable reading of Dickens. Perhaps it is not accidental that Van Gogh's wide reading concentrated especially on his beloved Dickens, whose:

> radicalism is of the vaguest kind, and yet one knows that it is there. That is the difference between being a moralist and a politician. He has no constructive suggestions, not even a clear grasp of the society he is attacking, only an emotional perception that something is wrong. All he can finally say is, "Behave decently," which as I suggested earlier, is not necessarily so shallow as it sounds. Most revolutionaries are potential Tories, because they imagine that everything can be put right by altering the *shape* of society; once that change is effected, as it sometimes is, they see no need for any other. Dickens has not this kind of mental coarseness. The vagueness of his discontent is the mark of its permanence. What he is against is not this or that institution, but, as Chesterton put it, "an expression on the human face".[12]

I begin with the portraits because some of the most vexed questions about Van Gogh's achievement reside here but also because, aside from the questions of modernism and modern art, the nature of his very great accomplishment can here be seen not as revolutionary, nor as mad, but as (in Orwell's terms) moral. The achievement represents Van Gogh's humanism, arising from choice his sitting and arrangement, his use of colour and form in his subjects, and probably as well from his deep links with both peasant reality and the French realism of J.F. Millet. The *Portrait of Père Tangay* (1887) for example, whose own warm humanism shines through in his direct pleasant gaze, his clasped hands, his sturdy peasant-like figure facing us, while in the background is a rich display of Japanese prints. Or *La Berceuse: Madame Augustine Roulin* (1889) who holds a rope with which to rock a cradle, her green dress, her orange hair setting her off strikingly against a background of floral patterns. The title indicates something of the reference intended: Lullaby from a novel of Pierre Loti, focusing on the women as madonna. His women, in fact, present a series of human roles and type, never sentimentalized: *La Segatoni: The Italian Woman with Daisies* (1887), again with floral motifs and sharp colouring, the face passionate, intense; *L'Arlessiene: Madame Genoux with Books* (1889), the forceful colours and simple forms contrasting with the poise and dignity of the woman. The collection is both dazzling and humane, a product of deep concern and love.

Technically, too, the portraits point to Van Gogh's Cloisonist concerns with line, form and colour. Figures are sharply outlined or flattened, colour present in flat surfaces and contrasts, line strongly separating areas and forms. Though there are still disagreements over origin and source, the Cloisonist aesthetic shows a much more clearly defined history than some of the accompanying variations and developments, and it is by no means too much to claim for it a significant, important advance on impressionism toward the proliferation of possibilities that marks modernism. This point is the one at which contemporary art criticism demands a finer, subtler vocabulary and set of distinctions than those I have been so crudely and roughly deploying here. What is this rude talk, the academic art historian asks, about revolution, politics, morality, the sanity-insanity inversion? Given so elaborate and extensive an exhibition as the Van Gogh, we are expected to produce genuine discourse about synthetism, symbolism, pointillism, plastic colour, expressionism, even fauvism. No doubt, the technical vocabulary has its functions, especially for art history. Finer distinctions are needed. But for my purpose, at least in cultural criticism as distinct from art history, the crucial point, on which so much else of this argument rests, remains the meaning of "modern" as opposed to (for want of a better word) "ancient." A few major commentators may be cited more or less at random along a recognizable spectrum of possibilities and attitudes on this point. Northrop Frye, a liberal humanist, remains determinedly cheerful about "modern," taken as a cultural, not a chronological term. Modern, in art, signifies the active, dynamic creative as opposed to the passive responses of propaganda and advertising encouraged by the media. Frye admits to areas of confusion and difficulty in the modes of perceptual and anti-art. At the opposite pole, Berger, the marxist (rather in the style of Lukács), remarks on the triviality and pathology of alienated art (either romantic consolations of formal or technical perfection for its own sake *or* subjective chaos) as opposed to the human achievement of objective discovery or the "capacity to disclose that which exists" (defined, often, as "work" to parallel "labour").[13] Dennis Lee and George Grant, the conservatives, equating modern with technology and "progress," offer glum consequences. Harold Bloom, reading the past in Freudian, if not Gnostic, terms proposes a "mis-reading," the re-writing of the past so that it appears to have imitated us; Turner is Van Gogh's follower. And finally Steiner, elitist and academic, sees the modern as barbaric except as structural linguistics, the strange loops of self-referring forms.

In brief, the most impressive cultural analyses we possess either deplore or dismiss modernism. And one can hazard a guess as to why: a loss of clarity, of order, of formal convention, of coherence, of objectivity, of "the capacity to disclose that which exists." The loss is attendant on abandoning perspective, clear formal order, spatial coherence. Cloisonism has its fairly clear

definitions and to summarize the consequence as barbarism is sheer philistine brutality. But the consequence of the turn to distortion and incoherence is enormous. Passion, conviction, colouring, intensity do not finally offer consolation — or hope. Berger's condemnation (not of the early 'modern masters' — Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gaugin, Picasso, Juan Gris, Braque, Matisse, but those who follow into extremism) is fierce but not brutal, not philistine:

> Behind the extremism of the so-called *avant-garde* is the desperation of despair. The *avant-garde* today are so terrified of what the world is becoming that they try to reduce it to the dimensions of their own unconscious, whilst boasting that these are the dimensions of the cosmos itself.[14]

Is it wrong to see this beginning with Cloisonism? The exhibition catalogue gives a fair description:

> derived from a type of inlaid work which had been widely used in Byzantine and related Western Medieval forms of religious art. The chief characteristics of this style were fields of flat bright colouration separated into compartments by outline contours of wire or ridges left by gouging a metal plate. The result was analogous to stained glass windows and other forms of mediaeval art featuring intense colours, strong figured outlines and little, if any, modelling in the art.[15]

Anquetin's *Avenue de Clichy: Five o'clock in the Evening* (1887) is the work providing the name *Cloisonism* to the critic and symbolist, Eduard Dujardin, who wrote of it in a significant article. But if the style suggested the end of perspective, the beginning of distorted form and new modes of colouration, *Avenue de Cliche* pointed further as well. Anquetin had discovered the relationship between colour and psychological mood; the evening blue contrasts sharply with the yellow-orange interior light creating a special sense of place, time, attitude. Van Gogh's *The Cafe Terrace on the Place des Forum, Arles at Night* (1888) plays with the same contrasts of night (natural light), stars and artificial light (gas-jets on the terrace) for uncanny contrasts. Two aspects of distortion for powerful effect had emerged: separation of forms and colour-forms for perceptual and emotional expression. Under the excitement

of new possibilities and in connection with his own project for a school of the south at Arles, Van Gogh worked out a number of his greatest paintings, some as always under the influence of or modified by the work of other painters whose methods or structures he followed or improved on. Among the most famous, included in the exhibition, are: *The Mowers, Arles in the Background* (1888) which follows Anquetin's ground-breaking *The Mowers at Noon: Summer* (1887), both "primitive," intentionally naive, in the use of simplified forms and flattened images under a single predominant colour; *Vincent's House on the Place Lamartine, Arles* (1888) the blues and yellow in striking, almost ominous contrast; the extraordinary *Vincent's Bedroom at Arles* (1888) — "The colour" wrote Van Gogh "is to do everything and giving by its simplification a grander style to things, is to be suggestive here of *rest* or of sleep in general."[16] Yet there are no shadows and the objects attain the clarity and luminosity of dream images. There is, too, his *The Sower* (1888), an odd figure under an immense sun that throbs above, and beside the asymmetrically poised peasant a dark huge tree-trunk diametrically thrusting across the picture. And *The Langlois Bridge with Women Washing* (1888), like so much of his work, points to a third element, not only new design and colour but the effects of Japanese prints and motifs.

Here perhaps we find the most difficult aspect of post-impressionism, its primitivism. Van Gogh's Japanism is, of course, explicit, as in the colourful and bold assertions of *Japanoiserie: the Courtesan (after Kesai Eisen)* (1887). But Gauguin's urge toward the savage remains, like the painter, in a sense closed, mysterious. His figures lurch toward us out of dark dreams: three Breton women, green wooden figures lowering a green Christ behind a peasant woman in blue and red in the foreground. The passion of Gauguin or the peasants? The background has hills, colour, the sea. *The Yellow Christ* (1889) is a gothic Gauguin on the cross before three women in peasant dress, the fields orange, "the great rustic and superstitious simplicity" said Gauguin "of the Breton peasantry." But who is superstitious? There is a desolate Goya-like creature at the foreground of *Grape — Gathering — Human Misery* (1889); two ghost-like creatures in black and blue shawls in *Women at Arles: The Mistral* (1888); most mysterious of all, a landscape with a nude who lies like a funeral statue, embracing a fox, a small flower in her right hand. The title? *The Loss of Virginity* (1890-91).

Powerful, complex, such images point to another direction of extremist art, the modernism of the criminal artist as outcast and savage: Gauguin as *Christ in the Garden of Olives* (1889). The Breton paintings of the school of Cloisonism explores a variety of other religious imagery, explicit and covert, from Bernard's gothic abstraction in *Christ at the Foot of the Cross: Lamentation* to his complexly-organized *Breton Women in the Meadow: Pardon at Pont Avon* (1888) (echoed in Van Gogh's *Breton Women in the*

Meadow [1888].) But there are as well powerful plain peasant motifs, as in Jacob Meyer de Haan's *Breton Women Scratching Hemp* (1889) and Charles Laval's *Going to the Market* (1888).

Splendidly various as the exhibition is, it is by no means confined to Breton landscapes or the scenes of Arles. To anyone who has travelled through Brittany, its Celtic otherworldly atmosphere does reach out to a Tolkien-like world of the life of peasants, the figures of dream, the atmosphere of haunting and grief-stricken oppressed figures. Arles burns forever under the yellow sun, the starry night. Yet the post-impressionists could not forget the boulevards of Paris. Yet another mode touches the forms they explored: the expressive nervous and mannered line anticipating the style of Art Nouveau. It appears in Anquetin's *The Bridge of Saint-Pères: Gust of Wind* (1889), in the manes of horses caught in the motion of a woman's shawl and cloak, all seen against a Paris river-bank. *The Rond Point at the Champs Elysée* (1889) is more stylized in the Cloisonist manner though the horses and women echo the motifs of *Gust of Wind*. With Toulouse-Lautrec we enter the circuses, the dance halls, the world of models, bohemians, painters, later to become images of Art-Nouveau, though here still Cloisonist, as in *At the Circus Fernando* (1887) and the Ball at the *Moulin de la Galette* (1889). With Anquetin's *The Dance Hall at the Moulin Rouge* (1893) it is as if the two styles or rather several modes mysteriously blend: Japanese prints, the flat colouring of Toulouse-Lautrec's posters, the simplification of figure, the colour and crowds of bohemian halls (for at the centre is Toulouse-Lautrec's Jane Avril in the same pose as in his famous version, alive in the one as in the other to link new and old visual languages).

It is, in fact, in the variety built on so few structural devices — colour divisions, formal line design, figure distortion — that the modernism of the post-impressionists emerges. Berger would have it, correctly I think, that the "early modern" masters "put all their revolutionary fervour into their art considered as art. Because they did not see how to make a revolution in the streets, they made one on their canvass."[17] They did not see either, the more terrible consequences. The revolution eats its children.

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Notes

1. Bogomilia Welsh-Ovcharov, *Vincent Van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 1981. I am grateful to Professor Christopher Innes and Professor Ekbert Faas for information about Antonin Artaud and Vincent Van Gogh.

2. Northrop Frye, *The Modern Century*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 62.

3. John Berger, *Permanent Red*, London: Methuen, 1969, p. 34.

4. *Van Gogh A Self-Portrait*, Letters ... Selected by W. H. Auden, Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1961, p. 398.

5. Martin Esslin, *Artaud*, London: Fontana/Collins, 1976, p. 61.

6. Esslin, p. 106.

7. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, trans. Richard Howard Tavistock, 1967 cited in Ronald Hayman, *Artaud and After*, Oxford, 1977, p. 159.

8. Jack Herschman, ed., *Antonin Artaud Anthology*, Second Revision Revised, San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1970, p. 160.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

10. Berger, p. 201.

11. *Welsh-Oucharov*, p. 46.

12. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, eds., *George Orwell, Collected Essays, Journals and Essays,* Vol. I, London: Secker and Warburg, 1968, p. 457-458.

13. Berger, p. 33. On the question of the triviality of contemporary work, Berger remarks tellingly, "The artist has ... been forced to his knees, and there tries to find significance in the scraps around him on the floor. Although it would be a mistake to make a rigid formula out of this, the thinness, spikiness, and broken, fragmentary nature of most forms in post-war painting and sculptures surely reflect the failure of nerve that I am discussing."

14. Berger, p. 213.

15. *Welsh-Oucharov*, p. 45.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

17. Berger, p. 212-213.

FROM MAGRITTE, THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

Aubrey Neal

Without surrendering to evidence which even if conclusive would convict us of our own bad faith, we must entertain the possibility of our imprisonment in discourse. Although depressing to consider, it is certainly not unimaginable that the formal structure of articulation, this concrete universal of hard-won intersubjectivity, has become as reified an incarnation of surplus value as the invisible hand ever prestidigitated from the grimiest Manchester gloom. Who has not seen midnight lurking in the high noon of reason and felt a chilling consonance of consciousness with Foucault's drastic vision of the great ephemera — *Sapientia?*

It is not from fear or resignation, but from the experience and umbilication of our Being-in-the-world that ears and eyes open to new songs of relatedness. We do not hear George Crumb and Murray Schafer, we do not see Escher and Magritte. We experience a consciousness of meaning again being in motion. Under the broad spacious imperial vista of disciplinary common prayer we feel the oath — the vulgar motion of primary filiations. They compel, they confuse, they bore and tickle; and with all the zoo has been resavaged. We feel with Mohr that it is good.

Harmony can be heard or it can be analyzed. Sometimes it can actually be an event. The following contribution is resonant with the wave motion of contemporary experience. It is therapist and shaman; artist and scholar; poet and preacher. The journal hopes the reader can surrender some of our stern insularities of practical reason for its duration. Reading Mohr requires the will to forget Mohr. Moving with Mohr signifies the dissolution of the fixed self. Mohr writes for pure reflection in good faith. He would let us lose his object to find our own. He would let us flee anguish in order to discover our own.

In Mohr we encounter concrete universals from our intersubjective world re-represented as entities in their own right. Indeed, it is well we should meet for we have been dispossessed of them. Mohr joins experience to the transcendental reconstitution of creative historical consciousness and explodes traditional discourse. Form dissolves back into the for-itself from which it was fashioned. Its implosion in bi-lingual puns and etymological asides reconstitutes its dignity as lived rather than lived in.

In a parallel manner, the Canadian composer Murray Schafer advocates the desirability of "ear-cleaning" in order to rid the tyrannized intelligence of its own self-imposed dissonances. With great respects to Schafer, we propose one sense can best be cleaned by another. We would ask the eye to cleanse the

ear and for this purpose enlist the work of the Belgian painter, René Magritte. Magritte's work is the visual counterpart and intellectual *doppelganger* to Mohr. Mohr and Magritte propose to restore the integrity of the grammatical unity. Each uses "fat incongruitites" (Magritte) to make his point. Each is devoted to recreating a sense of awe. Each is devoted to reconstituting a primary experience of discovery. Each wants the world to reappear fresh and newly opened. The mutual reinforcement of Magritte and Mohr should clear eye or ear of at least one or two major diremptive dissonances. We heartily recommend daily ablutions in the imagery of both.

Mohr and Magritte are among the truth-sayers of transcendental consciousness. Their grammar is surreal because they know through experience and reflection (in that order) the truth of the creative imagination. Their work realizes the transformation of perception into reflection. They bring us back to a truth we conveniently forget, i.e., thought does not represent objects to itself in the experience of reflection. Rumination is not a bovine mechanic referring to a psychic second stomach. On the contrary, reflection undertakes its transcendental project by means of images — objects which have been transformed already by their introduction into the intentional stream of one's Being-in-the-world. The schizophrenic, the body without organs, thinks in objects; indeed he thinks he is an object and the nature of his project is to flee his Being-in-the-world in order to be it. Mohr and Magritte call us back to primary intentional structures. In doing so, they consumate in an explosive re-opening upon the world the threads of the old phenomenological argument.

The world does not invite nihilation by means of universal perception grids (Merleau-Ponty) nor is it apprehended under the management of Kantian judgement (Hussel). Mohr and Magritte interrogate the life-world at the imaginary plane wherein its pure Being for-itself becomes significant. The beholder knows that he knows when pure Being collides. All knowing is gentle gloating. All reflection is a seemly meeting with the invisible visible. Thus the encounter with Mohr and Magritte is a dialogue with the creative imagination, for they apply Gadamer's experience of art to the life-world. With them, reflection is always a "coming home".

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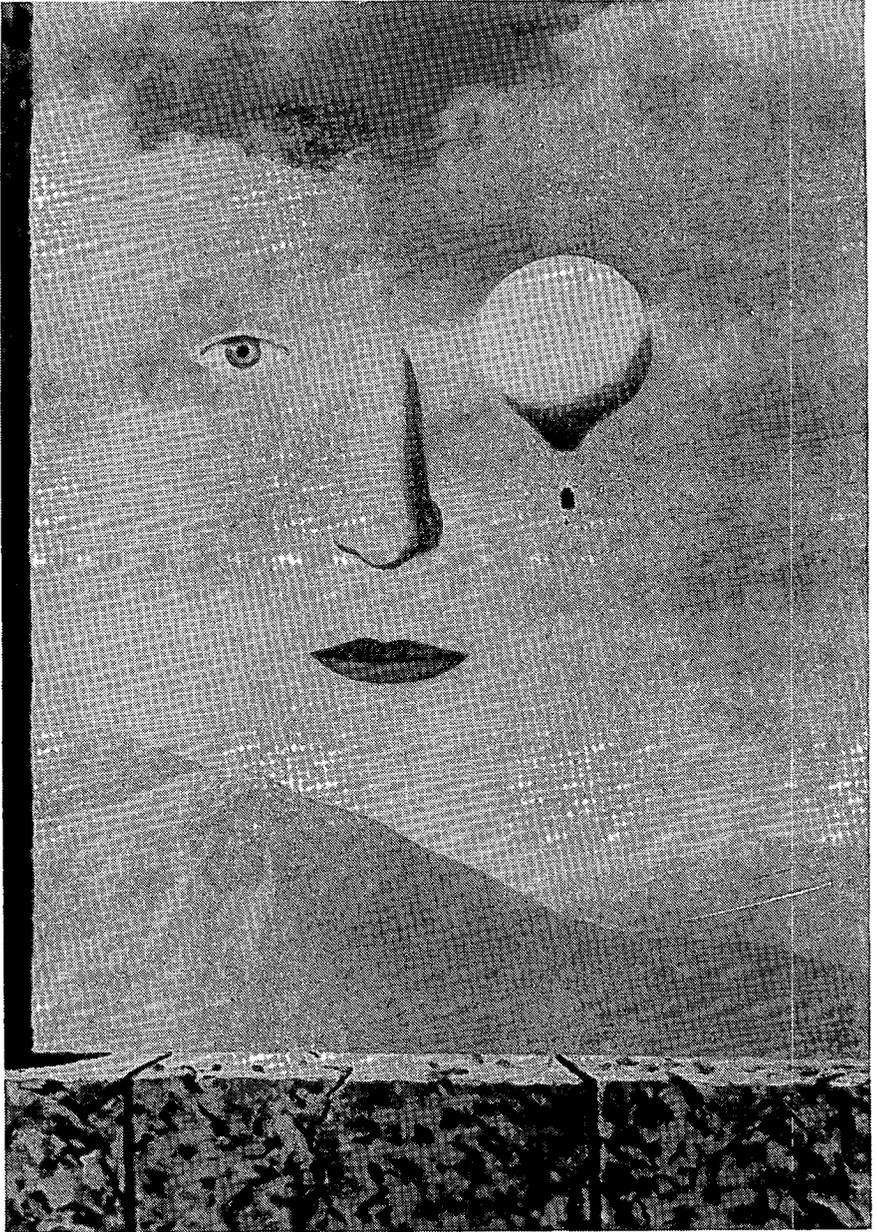
The Age of Enlightenment/Le siècle des lumières. 1967. Private collection

The Betrayal of Images/La trahison des images. 1929. Los Angeles County Museum of Art

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE BROKEN SPIRIT

Johann W. Mohr

You ask me why I have split the mind from the body. This is what I found; it has been done to us and whether we see it or not, it is now in us like a genetic defect, a bum gene or a freak mutation which we must trace before it deigns to destroy us. (The it is still us)

I. BEING ON TIME

To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.
(Ecclesiastes 3,1)

They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters; in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.
(Job 30,14)

17.1   The accident is time. We must be getting old. The day of the enlightenment has darkened and we attach to most of its signs the prefix post — (or neo - which is the same). But the milktrain does not stop here any more; we are waiting for Godot.

17.2   Being and Time splits being and time. The concepts capture no thing and even care (Sorge) is visible only in engraved faces, the rumour of runes, lineage of lines. Duration is visible in what has and has been — endured. Age, the sedimentation of time in body and thing; time as body time, as matter time, as time that matters, as embodiment.

17.3   Time is in the mind, age in the body. Time is part, particle and separation (*di-). Time is measure which divides and like the ruler does not change. Time does not change; change is in time, through time and over time. Time has to be estranged from lifetime to let life emerge. The question Brown poses to Vico and Joyce is: Time, gentlemen, please? And Eliot urges: Hurry up please it's time — for the fire sermon.

17.4   Lifetime is age (Skt. ayus-life, Lat. aevum) era, epoch and generation (Gr. aion) as well as eternity (aevum). Age is in the world, (wer-eld, man-age). The closest time comes to the world is in the tide which is ageless.

17.5   The vision that is not subject to history is the vision that does not change (itself or the world). The vision that does not carry its past has no future. The absolute is absolved from the world, from age and decay. All ideas are absolute; only their embodiment can be tarnished in time and it is in the tarnish that things show their mettle (their search).

17.6   Marx received his vision from the world he was in and as it was not. He insisted that the absolute was absolved from the world, that the idea had no praxis. But his strength was in the idea, his praxis fed on resentment and the will to power. There was desire, but desire was perverted into the necessity of time which is history, the high story which is made. And the idea becomes the praxis it cannot be — with a vengeance.

17.7   The point is not to interpret the world nor to change it but to realize it. The point is being on time, where time is the age which calls us. To assume that the spirit expresses itself in history is to transform the romance into the novel which takes us in and hides us. To assume that the spirit fulfills itself in the state is to offer us up to the Leviathan which consumes us.

17.8   Marx saw what Hegel was not. Marxism (like any-ism) cannot see what Marx was not and the state will not wither away as long as it is our hiding place. The contract to sell our will (which curiously is called social) voids the testament — old and new. Ulysses, having been everywhere and nowhere finds his home in a sorry state. All that is left are the yearnings of Molly Bloom.

17.9   Suspension of time is in the written word. The world as will and idea projected into the future negates its own negation. Being and Nothingness splits being and nothingness. L'être est tiré du néant. Naked I came from the womb, naked I shall return whence I came. What is left? The word vanity identifies the self-satisfied preacher who is empty. Job consults three therapists in the know and a lawyer who has made it. They could have profitted from the preacher. Job cannot profit from them. The preacher is right. Job is real.

*   *   *

18.1   The preacher's vanity (emptiness) is the will to power. The period ends in the point. Caught in the world like on the eve of a journey in childhood when the night would not pass turns into the fear of passing into the night. We (and the preacher) have learned to prepare ourselves and no longer know what for.

18.2   The moment must fulfill itself in the moment to free the momentum. Saving the moment as capital, mortgages the future with emptiness. In the long run we are all dead; the wages of power are death. The naked result is the corpse which left the momentum behind. (Hegel).

18.3   We have no time — time has us when we mind it. There is a mean-ness in Marx and pleasure in Freud is little more than a principle (and a name). Mean-ness blotches the plastic, the pure idea in which matter does not matter, the pliable form, the pride of our time, the enemy of age. Time can be stretched into eternity, age foreshadows ending.

18.4   What is left is the tarnish of time, the mettle of things. People and things which like plastic cannot show age, only use-age are a sad sight. Stone and wood retain their dignity and gain dignity through marks in time. Envisage plastic columns years hence. Compare the scratch in the arborite table with the age marks in pine.

18.5   Leisure (scholse) has long been converted into school; it had to be reinvented as leisure time (otium) which industry changed into otiose idleness, which is use-less. Time as negotiable (neg-otium) instrument has to hide its origin in the absolute. The amateur (the lover) and the dilettante (the enjoyer) had to be degraded; they were wasting their time.

18.6   The ultimate punishment in law is the deprivation of life, now mostly reduced to life-time. Sentences are expressed in time and even where money is demanded, time is an option. Prison language is full of time words. There one can *do* time, rough time or easy time, one can *be* a long timer or a short timer; there is time for good behaviour, statutorily earned or remitted.

18.7   The real absolute is the taken for granted, the unstated premise. The tremors which open the ground show the absurd in existence. Being thrown into the world (Geworfenheit) is the Fall into Time, the Temptation to Exist. The absolute is endless. Every dissolution of the taken for granted is an absolution, a te absolvo, which asks to be rebound. (re-ligio).

18.8   Time is absolute and taken for granted most of the time. Only in

conversion (the illegal act) of time into money, of time into property to have or to be given, of buying on time (time the great collateral) does time lose its inexorable threat and becomes a negotiable instrument.

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19.1   The minute you count the hours, the days slow down and months and years disappear into ungraspable distance. A time which measures time in fractions of seconds can never grasp its age. But only with seconds (and preferably fractions) can you build sequences of willed direction.

19.2   The minute gives itself away in the minute. The small part which is no longer a particle, the plebs which nevertheless form the multitudes; The minutes are less (minus) yet form the instance (this minute). The hour is already the season of the preacher, the prime of time, the quarters of heaven; the book of hours, time for devotion.

19.3   The difference between chronos and kairos is overdone. The lingering delay in the origin of chronos becomes period and portion. The chronicle still orders events in time until chronometry makes the measure succinct, girds up the garment of time. Kairos always had its eye on the right time and place, the propitious proportion, advantage and profit (paid for by crisis).

19.4   The year speaks of passing (Skt. yatus) but over time merged with the hour. It all came to pass. The day never spoke of time but of burning, the other side of night, the daughter of chaos which had to be reckoned and reckoned with (fortnight). The week has always been weak as a changling (the seventh day, the bride notwithstanding).

19.5   Remains the month, mene, menses and moon, like the night a measure of time, tide and body as the day and the sun never was.
    In all the words, time was of the world, was of matter and space, inseparable from space as Einstein rediscovered; but not of the empty space and matter of modern science. Time now disappears in squared acceleration and matter as mass in pure energy. The life and history of substance, the matter of mass is left as the fallout unaccounted for in the equation.

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20.1   Generalizations are static states. Regularity, which is rule and dominance (regere) is perverted order which was the beginning (ordior) and the beginning of speech (oro) raised into visibility (orior), birth and body as origin, species and kin.

20.2   Energy is bound in relation. The freeing of energy is a destruction of relation in fission and a perversion of relations in fusion, a fearsome task. Free floating energy uncathected is anxiety seeking control and regulation or a new bond and order (re-ligio) to escape its own destruction in implosion.

20.3   Probability calculations are full of holes (and so are projections). But the holes are not empty; they show up in time as pollution, slag heap and radio active waste. Fission, the most simple generation of new life, becomes the ominous division of the bombarded nucleus. The cleaner perversion of fusion is hard to control.
   Violence was present in the language of nuclear physics long before the explosion.

20.4   World War I (even wars can be played by numbers) was still bio-degradable, and so was much of No. II. They were only motions speeded up in slaughter and destruction which time accomplishes itself in time if not resisted by care and relation. The splitting of energy from matter in which matter itself changes is a reversal of time. Dementia praecox becomes schizophrenia, the return to primary ideation.

20.5   The space-time continuum is the extended coordinate system. Where is Being located? Relativity decrees: anywhere. But only the mind can be anywhere, the body must be somewhere. Anywhere cannot be experienced or cared for. Relativity destroys the texture of relation even though it posits the point and the changing vistas. Relativity could also remind us of our singularity and its limits and lead us to memory and context, humility and awe.

20.6   The awe of Einstein repressed becomes the awful in Oppenheimer and the last remnants of humility disappear in Teller who includes in his calculus the relative merits of millions of bodies. Hahn still hoped that God would not allow it but Deus est was a thing of the past and corporae sunt had become only a matter of bookkeeping and of parts to be used for experiment and lampshades, fission and fusion. Man deprived of being in time became the refuse, the uncritical mass of which there has always been enough (the rumour had been around for a century that there were too many).

20.7   How do light years relate to body time and heat death to death? Metaphors like the birth and death of the sun give a semblance of relation to what we cannot relate and relieve us from the relations we are in. The metaphor is conceivable but cannot be experienced; the other, the real, remains inconceivable even in the experience.

II.   GOING TO CLASS

The thing which has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.
(Ecclesiastes 1,8)

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I demand of thee, and answer thou me.
(Job 38, 2-3)

21.1   Between the specific and the general arises the class. The marketplace (agora) has to be down-graded to the category. To convert age into time, the story into history, space into point and direction, matter which matters into materialism we have to go to class (as Marx told us).

21.2   The sign and signal (classicum), the broken image restructured into department, squadron, fleet and rank (classis). Classifying as activity comes late in time (1799) and in the life world class emerges after species, genera and order are broken down.

21.3   Servius Tullius (so it is said) divided the Romans into six classes for the purpose of taxation. But the word in this sense only re-emerges in 1772 and in the sense of rank, order and caste in 1845. The Decline and Fail of the Roman Empire appears in 1776 (Vol. I) and the Communist Manifesto in 1848. The appearance of the word precedes the treatise and word and treatise foreshadow the world to be, the struggle for abolition and retention of empire and class. The taken-for-granted turns problematic in the appearance of the word, the sign and signal.

21.4   Classicus non proletarius est. Let them have schools. Bemoan the triumph of barbary and religion (Gibbons), send them to class to be formed and re-formed. Let the class struggle be a struggle to be classed. The public

schools were for those destined to dominate. When domination became a matter for institutions rather than persons, the public school went public to keep submission intact. The classici went private.

21.5   The proletarius served the state by providing children only; the proletarian as a means of production in history and for history. Children — no longer a scarcity in the age of the growing machine, the new means of production of surplus values. It takes discipline to live up to the machine, to become its disciple; it takes the breaking of time into periods of minutes to break the spirit; it takes the division of subject matter into partialized objects, into disciplines, to create the great scientific fetish. The new disciple has to be taken apart (*dis-cipio) in dispute (disceptatio) before he can find a new identity in the concept.

21.6   Only Latin vulgarized could allow Romance. The knight comes from the servant (Knecht) and leaves the knave behind. The split produces Don Quixote and Sancho Panza which are equally funny (and equally sad). The story retold a thousand times not only in the novel, the new romance, but in play and replay from the decline and fall of the Roman empire to the Untergang des Abendlandes.

21.7   Class struggle is a romantic notion. The ground for the French Revolution was laid by aristocrats to retain standing in the bourgeois empire. Marx-Engels, the proto-typical bourgeois connection, saved their class from extinction, whether the revolution did or did not take place. Revolutions, as the word tells us, must be their own betrayal straining to return to the status quo. The motion is on the circumference, not the centre.

21.8   The real shift is at the centre, the spirit. Ideologies are super structures setting the wheel of time in motion by friction from the top. When the revolution is grounded it grinds a new age, grinding into the ground indiscriminately all those coming under the wheel. The strong who can reverse their position in time stay on top.

21.9   Even continuous revolution carries the romantic notion, the imaginary, towards classical structures. New images, born of the imagination of the past which is the imagination of what has not been, are the spectre not only of Europe, but wherever age has been marking time.

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THE BROKEN SPIRIT

22.1   The Bastille was almost empty when it was stormed. It was to be full in years to come. The destruction of the symbol of repression made room for the reign of terror. The age of the law had arrived with Danton and Robespierre, the lawyers and sons of lawyers. Freedom was to be no longer an aspiration but a decree, which remained a decree nisi ever since. The constitution became an institution, the body a corporation. But the republic (as always) was not to be a res publica but a possibility for new power.

22.2   The sons of the people came later. The man of steel who waited for the death of his lawyer friend Lenin (the son of the schoolmaster) to oust the other bourgeois left over from the French Revolution, the man with another false name, Trotsky. But the paranoia persisted in power unassuaged by expulsion and show trials. Death had to go as far as Mexico to cool the resentment which had become history.

22.3   Altruism cannot be sustained by the ego. Otherness cannot be allowed if time is to be made over into change. The point was not to interpret the world and its ways but to make it over into one's own image. Science has shown that singularity of purpose can be successful and success is, if one succeeds one's self. L'état c'est moi because I am the law and thou shalt have no other Gods beside me.

22.4   When Napoleon became Consul, Danton, Robespierre and Marat, the professionals, were already dead. The 18th Brumaire was a farce the first time around (Louis Philippe was only a late echo). The first time was not the first time. It took the Roman Republic centuries to become an empire and both bread and circus were missing in the late imitations, if one discounts the spectacle based on the second proposition of Dr. Guillotin: in all cases of capital punishment it shall be of the same kind — that is decapitation — and it shall be executed by means of a machine.

22.5   Democracy has arrived swiftly in sameness (idem/identity), the separation of capital (the head) from its living encumbrance and by the grace of the machine. Descarte's and Hobbes' dismembered body becomes a reality (and so does the state). In true scientific spirit the machine was tested and perfected on dead bodies in the hospital of Bicêtre and re-tested on a highwayman before it was ready for the assemblyline as a re-public health measure. Dr. Guillotin was, after all, a physician.

22.6   The coin read on one side: Napoléon Empereur, and on the other: Républic Française. You can eat your cake and have it but you have to produce ever new cakes with a sleight of hand which is terror, which is fear (L.

terror) and trembling (Gr. treein) which precedes the Sickness unto Death. Terror is terrific.

22.7 Terror is externalized and objectified in law and war. The Code Napoléon captured even those who resisted the general, and the generals learned that war was a craft which could involve all against all; the preoccupation of nobles had popular possibilities.

22.8 They all learned. The ex-seminarian, the ex-schoolteacher and the artist manqué discovered that only the head can decide and that there is room only for one head. The lesson of the preacher on vanity cannot be heeded, it remains enticing to be king, scholar, builder and planner, to fashion the fate of others, to hide one's own. (To hide Job).

* * *

23.1 To be one in many remains intolerable. The Revolt of the Masses is in the revulsion of the one. We must go to class to break the unbearable tension between the one and the many. But even the most intricate classification can never arrive at the one. Science stops there and so do statistics and even government figures have to be withheld when the referent becomes identifiable.

23.2 Innocently we learn to count: one, two, three — infinity. And we are taught regularity and precision of mind to make everything equal and same so that we can add and subtract, multiply and divide apart from every context, custom and law (nomos) apart of the things themselves. The name (nomos) already a pretext, has to give way to the number; the name only glosses the particular, which has to be further stripped of rhythm, metre and verse (numerus) to become the pure number. If we learn well, we too can tend the machine and finally be replaced by it.

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24.1 Only the number emptied of rhyme and rhythm can be multiplied and divided at will. Only the invented word stripped of experience and expression can be used for objective description to which we no longer object. Things transformed are deprived of meeting, counsel and pleading (thing). With these components we can build — the tower of Babel.

24.2   What are we to make of speech which hides the speaker leaving the puppet whose strings disappear behind the curtain? Assertions without witness are assumptions and hearsay. Even doubt, the great (if not only) quality of the mind, must emerge from some body's mind; questions must be born and not posed. The posed question allows only the preposterous answer, which goes into the nowhere from which there is no return.

24.3   The question is real when it arises. It seeks for the mind to dis-cover itself. (Remember the mind is what we mind). The mind filled with inventions covers the question. The answer loses its over against (ante) and its voice (Skt. swara) which can only come from the wilderness. The question answered by the mind is not disclosed but closed, its fate not resolution (Aufhebung) but dissolution.

24.4   The mind must query the question in pure doubt. So far Descartes is right. Like the judge in a court of criminal jurisdiction (questio) must preserve his doubt until swayed by the facts before him, the mind must remain in doubt. The mind that establishes Being through cogitation has lost its essence, which is doubt. Cogito, ergo sum can only mean: I am in doubt. To demand more from the mind is to invoke the inquisition which tortures the body to uphold the doxa, the teaching which has come into question. The question denied leads to the loss of spirit.

24.5   The mind must remain in doubt and be continuously emptied of certainties to make room for the spirit, the breath (spiritus) which carries the unformed speech. Whereof one cannot speak thereof one must do silencing (Wittgenstein). Doubt is not formless — neither is silence. Silence and certainty suspended are the womb into which the spirit, the beginning of the word is received; culture medium in Petri dish. Soul as anima, as animal in animosity, which is silence and uncertainty resented, passion (animus) denied before the last crowing of the cock.

24.6   Being here (Dasein) is all we ever know; it is not all. The voice that hovers over the waters, the passion which infuses the emptiness after the last vestiges of hope have gone is not from here and not of us. Teach us to care and not to care, teach us to sit still; teach the teacher not to fill the silence.

24.7   To teach is to show the token (*taik-), the sign; to learn is to trace out (*leisan) what has been scratched into the surfaces so that one may read the riddle, interpret the dream, peruse the signs with or without uttering speech (the spark and the sparkle which comes from the crackling fire).

24.8   To teach in class and teach of class is to teach of time and history. The runes in the furrowed faces, the accoustics (hearing) which give the timbre to time, the taste of wine speak of age and story, the telling tale, the harmony of numbers and the fate of the word. In all the hurry, we have gained time; can we let it age? Can we bring classes out into the open to get a reading and a hearing, to discern the dream and achieve justice? Liberty and equality exist only in fraternity. Am I my brother's keeper avoids the fact that I have slain him.

III.   PUT IN PLACE

And further, by these, my son be admonished; of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.
(Ecclesiastes 12,12)

Here, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear. But now mine eye seeth thee.
(Job 42, 4-5)

25.1   Every group stratifies; but to talk of pecking order is to talk of chickens. To speak of territory is to speak of land possessed and not of breathing space. Ethos is the place where animals are, ethics is human.

25.2   There is order in life (Bios). The life world chooses itself to be as it is and sparkles with wonders (of origins unknown). In the parable of beauty and beast, of paradise lost and regained, the divine comedy begins. To be or not to be like an animal is out of the question. The song of innocence is broken by experience, the marriage of heaven and hell hides the neutrality of nature behind our contrary natures, behind the sick rose and the burning tyger. For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror which disdains to destroy us.

25.3   Evolution and revolution are images of necessity and desire. Necessity constitutes itself through probability and chance in innumerable throws of the dice, the regularity which leads to law. Random beginnings repeated, shape up absolute order, absolute power, ending in dinosaur and heat death — the whimper. Tests of significance disappear when the degrees of freedom are limited to one. But the dice are loaded by the desire to know and knowledge opens itself in the discards of nature and culture.

25.4 Knowledge of class, knowledge in class, knowledge classified by repeated throws of the mind, builds the normal distribution curve which takes itself for granted, transforms meaning into the mean; the rest becomes deviation — the meaning which is de-meaning even when standardized. Only one sperm makes the final entry.

25.5 The dice are loaded. Them that have shall be given. The sperm that arrives will grow, the others will perish. Care given becomes care taken and even money makes money. The gift turns easily into an attribute and leads the gifted to make claims in ego and class. Gifts carried to the wedding (A.S. gifta, Germ. Mitgift) turn to poison (Germ. Gift), yield turns into guilt if not returned manyfold over. The gift is a promise to be fulfilled, a consideration to be made value-able; a contract unspecified. The gift as claim (sui generis) hides the debt which can never be forgiven.

25.6 Status is the state we are in. L'état c'est moi is the king fallen from grace who cannot survive because he cannot survive. The claim made on class is a claim to survival. The social shows itself in what follows (sequor), what is on the way. The moral shows itself in the will (mos) to divest oneself of power, to be of a kind, neither: kind nor unkind. The Genealogy of Morals is derived from the Human, All Too Human and goes Beyond Good and Evil which is a matter of class and rank, of context and excess.

25.7 What we want to forget by all means is that the lowest number of any ranking carries the heaviest burden of proof. Morality shows itself only in the absence of power. This came to the man when he clung crying onto a beaten horse, repeating over and over again, io sono, Nietzsche, dionysus — the magic formula which could no longer hide the ecce homo.

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26.1 To stand for or before fate calls for professions. The prophecy and the oracle (fatum) swing between God's will (fatum) and bad luck (fatum). To admit to fatality is to show (fateor) our weakness, to betray (fateor) our impotence which makes us feel silly (fatuus). There is profit in magic.

26.2 Knowledge for sale is the trademark of the oldest profession. Adam and Eve should not have eaten the apple but sold it for gain and lived off the avails. Every act of knowing contains the knowledge of being denied everlasting life. The holy orgasm ends in the petit mort.

26.3   Between the oldest profession, prostituting the body and the next instituting the spirit, all others can be put into place. Care and companionship (hetaireia) freely given by the other (heteros) is at best still contained in the art of hetaera and geisha, Minnesinger and troubadour. Art can still embody the spirit and heal and make whole and bind back (religio) what is continuously broken in the known body and by the knowing mind.

26.4   To enquire into the logic of God (theology) is blasphemy, the blame-fame of emptiness and destruction which calls for apologia after apologia, the off-speech which hides the stand-off, the apostasy. The middle man stands in between; the medium in the end controls the message, the magi become magicians.

26.5   To be a priest was to be old (presbys); to demonstrate dignity in decay, to show that the body moves inexorably to poverty, chastity and obedience after the surplus value of sex and will are expended; to show that after nature's task is done, the remains are still holy and whole because they have been and have known; and that having been, even if only once, is grounds for praise.

26.6   The problem is power. Ecce homo, see here, a man. Who can muster the strength to wrestle again and again with the angel until the final defeat? Who has the trust to open himself up again and again to the judgment which commands the defeasance of the will to power? The old (presbys) who have willed the giving up of the will without touching the bi-sexed angel cannot escape from the resentment of "it has been" (the revulsion of the will) and force their resentment on the young to submit to poverty, chastity and obedience before their time.

26.7   The spirit which hates the body is sterilized in doxa and dogma, law and control. Being here is saved for being hereafter, the great postponement of gratification, the illusion of the future, the opiate of the oppressed. The message of joy ends in a grandiose whimper.

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27.1   The law seems to lay open the logos. Crime was to be the discernment (krynein) of the crisis between equals not subject to simple submission, but subject to the trial which culls out the sentence, a way of knowing (senti-entia) from the senses. A crime is not a wrong (tort) where the measure is known. An eye for an eye is simple compensation.

27.2   What concerns us in crime is not the act but the will. When there was only one will, there was only one crime — killing the king. The rest were wrongs. And wrongs can be righted by remedies. Punishment meant the money exchanged for harm done (puné). Mens rea was the mind we have to make a thing of, we cannot let pass by, we have to con-cern ourselves with together. The fine was to be the final arrangement for the broken peace.

27.3   Vengeance was the Lord's and even he limited himself in the covenant not to proceed to total destruction. From Lord to king and king to Lord the will was passed on and the yield was guilt. The king made a killing in crime which grew with the king's greed. The king has long been limited but not the greed and its wages are endorsed by the law.

27.4   Every command and commandment flows from authority which is the author of yester year. The commendation, the trust, the mandate we have together ossifies in the fiction of the social contract, which is the anti-social contract which delivers the will of the One to the few. What is one's own, peculiar and suitable, what is proper, is converted into property, in patrocinium and precarium, vassalage and benefice; finally the personal and the real is for sale; the fee (lordship) as fee (payment). Simple, if you have it, curtailed, if you don't.

27.5   The promise means nothing in law without a consideration, a matter which makes it matter. Moses, the law giver was not allowed into the promised land. When Joshua died, the Lord set judges over them and there was no end to killing and oppression. Judge Samson slew a thousand men with a jaw bone but was safe as long as he slept with prostitutes. Only love deceived him and deprived him of his might which was right.

27.6   Is it the war of all against all which necessitates the law or does the law uphold the war of the few against the many? Or is it all not very important, is it the high-story which hides the authorship of acts to which we all must answer? Let not the state declare human rights; the state giveth and the state taketh away even that which the state never possessed. We are choked in the ever increasing constriction of history and law.

27.7   We do need those who remind us, who call on us (ad vocare) to answer. We do not need those who speak for us, who profess and show us (and collect) the profit from middling. This is not to deny vocation in the face of adversity but pro-vocation which makes adversity into a system and converts law into the continuation of moral discourse by other means.

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28.1 The cloud of knowing precipitates into planning to put us in place. Take any field which professes to know our ways in the world and feel how the image settles into a norm. The expert speaks ex-parte and rarely means himself or us. Rich economists are rare, physicians do not live longer than others, psychologists and psychiatrists are not noted for the ease of their breathing; sociologists and social workers are not even each others' friends.

28.2 But they all tell us how to live and their noise is digested for the reader, be he esquire or playboy or parent and penetrates home and garden, nature and penthouse. Dear Abby, the sermons are endless on sound waves and sight waves and thinly disguised. When we are frightened enough we oblige and call for the law (there ought to be one) which spawns administrative directives and directors who see to it that resources become indeed scarce for those who do not blow their tune.

28.3 It is not a matter of ideology. Life has lost out to time and in all the business there is not enough time to enquire into the logic of ideas. Planning, according to Joe Stalin or Lord Keynes are both speculations in futures, on human capital and social debt. No market is free, least of all the marketplace of ideas. The game of glass beads is gone; the beads are now official currency.

28.4 How else to you rule a world, a country, perhaps a city; smaller units don't count. The trouble with the global village is that nobody is at home. Have there ever been so many concerned with so much and cared so little? Newton's law should now read: The level of concern increases by distance squared. The caretaker looks after the garbage of which there is plenty. For the rest there is liberty in librium and values are absorbed by valium. Experience is the problem — it hurts and humiliates us.

28.5 But even that tune is a tune of the time and misses the age we are in. The apocalypse is always behind us. The plaint is the eveningsong when Aurora is uncertain. The plaintiff who is unsure of the remedy cannot argue his case. The spirit of utopia is nowhere/erewhon in positivity as well as its negation. It is time to take the Sermon on the Mount seriously.

IV. SPACED OUT

*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the
morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.
Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.
(Mathew 6, 34)*

29.1   Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one - being on time
(exactly) having gone to class, into the cloud of knowing and having been put
in place so we may fit the capsule, we can now go into space and forget that we
have already been there for a long time.

29.2   Copernicus was well aware of the horrendous possibilities of his idea
and he consigned the book to the pope beginning anew the games of hide and
go seek and Blind Men's Buff. There was still room in the universe for ideas
even after the Summa and before the sum, the "I am", became an idea.

29.3   Kepler: My brain gets tired when I try to understand what I wrote and I
find it hard to re-discover the connection between the figures and the text, that
I established myself. (Frisch III, 146).

29.4   Galileo forced the issue. The catholic Descartes preferred to live in a
protestant country and the protestant Kepler in a catholic one. Galileo was
caught and finally pushed for the show trial, the showdown trial which
reverberated through the centuries. He had a gift for propaganda and his
name is still known unlike Bellarmine's (ever heard it?) the latter day saint
beatified in 1923 and cannonized in 1930 by an exhausted Church whose trial
was yet to come.

29.5   The truce between Athens and Jerusalem, between the great world
systems, so carefully wrought by the schoolmen was breaking apart; breaking
apart uni-verse and uni-versity. It was no easy matter. As always, everybody
was right but could not admit the other one's reasons and hardly their own. It
was not just to save Aristotle and the literal truth of Revelations but to save
comfort and commonsense. Even this morning the sun still rose and it will set
tonight in the world of experience which revolves around us and in us.

29.6   There are, after all, no limits to possibilities as Urban VIII put it to
Galileo; but this clearly came from the mind and it is no wonder that he felt
betrayed when he had to take a position in a world that was rapidly
disintegrating into possibilities which did not fit with each other. Catholicism
(Kata holos, on the whole) the universe (turning to one) — and the university

— may well be inventions, but not so much inventions of the mind as of coming into the world. The world is our centre even though geocentrism is an impossible claim; we are our own centre, even though egocentricity is an impossible position.

29.7   To put us in space is out of this world; the infinite possibilities of infinity destroy (to say it again) the affinities which have to be realized. Between explosion and implosion, the capsule which puts us in space and the capsule which spaces us out, stands the rigid control of law, order, class, state, dogma, rule and institution which have nothing to do with anything but the threat of extinction, the wish for extinction in and of a world which is no longer liveable.

*   *   *

30.1   The new gospel of science yearns for outer space and infinity and fission and fusion; the new heresy yearns for inner space and deliverance from the prefabricated universe. The rocket and the needle, the explosion and the rush, the frantic hysteria to escape the despair, to avoid the void of not being conscious of having a self, of being delivered to willing or not willing to be oneself.

30.2   Why do you take drugs? To feel myself. (This is the heresy; the official prescription is to not feel oneself without even noticing). We call violence senseless when it has become the only means of sensing the self that no longer is otherwise. And we stand puzzled in the best of all worlds that we have created. How is it possible that we do not fit into this world of our own making? Let us remake ourselves; making love is not enough, it still pushes us back into the snares of nature. Nothing less than genetic reconstruction will do to fit us with greater perfection to the new image in which we can finally create ourselves to make the chinese puzzle complete.

30.3   Meanwhile let the truth be securely locked up in the files of psychiatrists and other helpers (helping to maintain the system) and let it be hidden behind the law (where motivation, what moves us, is irrelevant). And let us not talk with each other to discover the pain and the panic. There is, after all, another large industry to give us the expurgated version of purgatory. Hell fire and damnation have different forms now and appear in unprecedented daily doseage to remind us of: Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che entrate. Take this morning's news as a sample, followed by the daily paper and hours and hours of screened productions which screen out the bit of world left around us. Give us today our daily circus.

30.4   Faster and faster we find that the universe is flawed, that we are the flaw. The story of creation and original sin makes sense in unfulfilled science, in planning which would be perfect except for the human flaw, the flaw of humans, the perversity of body and spirit which object to objectivity and create the disease of the mind, the negation of conclusion and linear prediction.

30.5   We have long been spaced out by knowledge. Even disease of the mind (which is dis-ease of the body and spirit) can be produced and controlled with a formula, the reduced form, at will. But the paradox appears with the doxa: the greater the control, the greater the breakage. Drugs, like ideas, escape the control of professions, the agents of the state, the agents of the state of mind whose will must be done.

*   *   *

31.1   What is there to be done? Nothing. But doing nothing is impossible (see 4.1) Let us *be* nothing, let us go to the east to be out of our mind in a consoling Om and the lotus position. It is the great weekend trade to be reached via the super highway or the roaring jet.

31.2   There is always the cosmic laughter which amazes the child who we abuse in us and around us because innocence is no longer a possibility.

31.3   Let us play the game of glass beads by any means, but let us be careful that we do not realize our games. Let us see that the patterns which emerge from the beads spell out the name that must not be named. Let us whisper to each other and forego the shout which reverberates empty in the all.

31.4   There is always a beginning. Every check mate can lead to a new game if we are not concerned with winning but the great illusion, the great allusions which do emerge from game after game.

31.5   There is this to be said: the general is not the universal, the particular not the particle. The more we turn to the One (uni-versus) the more we partake and the rumor runs swiftly that the child has been born. Generations are only one way in the world; even the lines of the Hollow Men sing, even Ash Wednesday resounds, the magi wander forever in the wasteland between birth and death.

31.6   Life is short, art is long. What measure is this? Like all discreet measures it confounds that art is in life and life in art. Generations come and generations go but the spirit abideth forever. Why is this so hard to remember?

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ARCHITECTURE, POLITICS
AND THE PUBLIC REALM

David Milne

A prominent architectural theorist recently complained that contemporary architecture is now stymied for our lack of a credible political vision.[1] This judgment serves to underline the conjoining of these two realms even if the relation is one which, for the most part, has almost entirely escaped the notice of thinkers in both disciplines. Doubtless each will account for such past indifference in his own fashion, but it is my contention that it is no longer a desirable or tenable state of affairs. For the political theorist, in particular, the promise expected at the intersection of these two fields, first highlighted by the Goodmans' early pioneering work, still remains to be realized.[2] Although animated by a somewhat different set of concerns than those of the Goodmans, I hope that this paper will help reawaken interest in the political theory of architecture.

To grasp this kind of subject, we must look first at the "politics" of architecture in past societies. I do not mean the politics and quarrels of individual architects, doubtless the usual modern treatment of this theme.[3] The "politics" of architecture here will concern rather the *inherently political* role which architecture seems invariably to perform in one polity or another. This emphasis will mean of course that we must depress for our purposes the importance of the aesthetic or technical faces of architecture — and certainly turn our backs upon the historically vacuous slogan, "art for art's sake." Indeed, I propose to turn this epithet on its head so that — at least for the art of architecture — it shall read "an art principally for the state's sake".[4]

Those who find such a remark provocative might begin by examining the world's architectural remains. For, in whatever antique condition they come to us and from whatever time and place, these buildings almost all betray a political or "stately" character, easily recognisable whether in the palaces of Versailles or Schöenbrun, the tombs of the ancient Pharaohs, the temples of the Acropolis, or the Gothic cathedrals of mediaeval Europe. Indeed, because of this intimate connection between architecture and the state's order architects have themselves argued that in the buildings of past ages we have the most reliable guides to the "life" of each civilization.

In fact, the art of architecture has virtually always served principally public interests — large state or quasi-state institutions. This "public" character of architecture, evident in any chronicle on world architecture, can be seen by the continuous string of monumental works of architectural art focussing almost exclusively on capitols, courts, palaces, tombs, temples, and churches. These,

after all, are the buildings expressing the state's order, a civilization's creed, its ruling institutions and classes, its political economy. Yet the politics of this connection have never been adequately grasped and addressed by political theory. What political function, for example, does architecture actually serve?

At its simplest level, architecture "houses" the principal institutions of a society; it provides a "space" wherein the activities of social and political institutions can be carried out. This role demands from the architect enormous skill and knowledge of the workings of those institutions even if, in this respect, except for scale, the "housing" function is hardly more than an extension of its modest domestic equivalent. But of course we know that in the case of the state and related institutions, the architectural function undergoes an ineluctable expansion, far beyond mere commodiousness and shelter. The *political* demand is that architecture shall make edifices befitting the importance and power of these institutions, that it shall make these institutions appear mighty and durable, and that it shall, in its symbolism and expressive form, state dramatically something of these institutions' "idea" of the world.

Such stately associations give to architecture, unlike any of the other arts, a special historical brilliance and meaning. Whether they by pyramids or parthenon, such buildings are the ghosts of time past, as the millions who make pilgrimages to see them quite readily understand. But for those interested in the political theory of architecture, there is much more to be gleaned here than antique wonder. Held out are the promise and possibility of truly integrating the distinctively "public" art of architecture into our understanding both of *politics* and of the *public realm.*

The Politics of Architecture

We must begin this enterprise by maintaining a wary distance from virtually all of the standard modern works in architectural theory. This distance is necessary for a variety of good reasons, not least of which is the patent avoidance and obfuscation of the subject by most architectural theorists.[5] Instead, we must look to the critical mining of history for unearthing the essential links between architecture and politics.

Despite the currently fashionable notion that almost any building — even a bicycle shed — can be architecture if only it satisfies our aesthetic standards, the historical record suggests that great architecture has always been restricted to a much more refined *class* of activities and meanings than the modern privatized notion understands.[6] Nor is this limitation simply accidental or arbitrary. Hard as it may be for the aestheticians of art to accept, the pretty bicycle shed is not likely to qualify as great architecture, even if the unlikely combination of desirous patron and skilled architect were present to attempt

to give bicycle shelter some architectural significance. The whole venture would be lacking existentially significant roots and betray a trivial social and political content.

Clearly the great historical works of architectural art derive much of their power, character, and definition — indeed their very status as architecture — from their standing as profound institutional metaphors, and not merely as aesthetically pleasing buildings. Of course, in practice, the two dimensions converge in every civilization, since it is always for *significant* institutions that the "arts" of buildings are most lavishly reserved. But this convergence ought not to obscure the institutional basis of architectural art, since its iconographic and emblematic power crucially depends upon it. Once this relationship is fully grasped, the political function of architecture can begin to be better understood and the possibility of a genuine "political theory of architecture" become more apparent.

If, as I have argued earlier, architecture is invariably about large state or quasi-state institutions, we may properly expect it to provide an important political service. Typically this service has consisted of the raising up of a profusion of wonderfully designed buildings and structures — palaces, churches, capitols, courts, tombs, and temples — all enshrining each civilization's code of "law and order." This conservative, stabilizing function may, of course, be sought by long-established institutional elites or by revolutionary regimes hoping to consolidate through architectural art their political grip upon dissident forces. But whatever the character of the political order, the essentially *conservative* alliance between architecture and power remains. It is for this reason that Norris Kelly Smith called architecture an "Establishment art":

> To put it bluntly, architecture has always been the art of the Establishment. It has been bought and paid for exclusively by successful, prosperous, property-owning institutions with a stake in the preservation of the status quo, and it has generally exhibited its greatest power and originality at times when those institutions have been threatened and in need of support. Needless to say, the other arts have also been patronized by members of those institutions. The uniqueness of architecture lies in the fact that it is *about* the institutional establishment, as the other arts generally are not, though on occasion they may be.[7]

A review of the history of architecture shows that Smith's hint about a varied but nonetheless decipherable *pattern* in architectural building takes us

even more deeply into what we might call a "dialectical understanding of the politics of architecture." For the pattern indicates that it is almost always at *critical* junctures in the life of each civilization that architecture is so frequently and spectacularly employed. The pattern discloses an ironical conjunction of political weakness (actual or imminent) and architectural strength, a relationship first recognized by Parkinson and propounded as his sixth law.[8]

The architecture of ancient Egypt, for example, has almost invariably given us the impression of its monumentally *static* and *stable* character as it no doubt was expected to do for its contemporaries. To view the pyramids at Giza, the colossal halls at Karnak, or the giant figures of Ramses II carved out of the rock cliff at Abu Simbel, leaves us (as standard works in Egyptian architecture never tire of insisting), with a deep sense of the monolithic, unchanging power of pharaoh's Egypt. The architecture evokes from us an awful *acceptance* of that regime's political power, strength, and durability.

That affirming of the politics of architecture is clear enough, even if a substantial part of its meaning still remains for us hidden and paradoxical. For the architectural art suggests, and is deliberately intended to suggest, an especially well-ordered and secure polity however, belied by actual political conditions. Hence, the assumed congruence between architecture and state is at best shaky, the architectural function serving to camouflage the deeper contradictions and dangers of the political order. This camouflaging function depends on architecture's special power to suggest stability and power — to compel awe and acceptance of the regime through a monumental art — and is the chief reason it is especially resorted to by institutional patrons who are threatened and in trouble. Such an account of the history of architecture is very much at variance with the often woolly, romantic, neo-Hegelian philosophy of modern architectural theory, but situates it quite rightly into the context of political affairs, revealing its ambivalent and defensive character. At the same time, such an account helps overturn an otherwise deceptively easy portrait of great architecture's proud and self-confident patrons.[9]

The great pyramids of the Old Kingdom dedicated to Cheops, Chephren, and Mycerinus, for example, represent the highest artistic achievement in monumentalism and abstract geometric power in this form, and yet they arise not uncoincidentally immediately before the power of the pharaohs is crippled by a rising feudal nobility. It took almost two hundred years of disorder before the authority of the pharaohs was once again restored in the Middle Kingdom. The stable promise which these great works of architecture suggest was therefore deceptive and misleading. The same is true of the colossal halls of Karnak and the monumental cliff temples which arise as reactive symbols to the disorder in the state and religious realm brought about

by Akhenaten's revolutionary initiatives. Egyptian stability was severely pressed by the young pharaoh's outright assault upon the temple of Amon and on the power of its priests. Externally, the Egyptian empire was already weakening from the highpoint which Akhenaten's great grandfather, Tuthmosis, had built, just as surely as the hold of the pharaohs on the priesthood was also weakening. Yet, precisely after the crushing of Akhenaten's changes, we see the greatest profusion of monumental architectural art in Egyptian history.[10] Architectural appearances aside, however, all was not well in Egypt.

History affords us many other illustrations of Parkinson's law. The building of the Parthenon and other structures on the Athenian acropolis was hardly completed before the disastrous Peloponnesian War brought about Athen's ruin. Between the Persian sacking of Athens in 479 and the perils of Greek inter-city warfare lay merely a few short decades, and even then, only for a few trifling years did the architectural glory of Greece truly coincide with its political power. The record shows that the Acropolis was thrown up at great speed at precisely the point when the political dangers to Athens were as grave as she had ever faced. The paradox is even more striking when we remember that this great architectural feat was financed by funds which imperial Athens had confiscated from her subjects and "allies" — architecture purchased at a fatal political price.

Russell Meiggs, in an interesting essay on the politics of the Parthenon, was able to uncover many of the political objectives of the Acropolis rebuilding programme in the stabilization sought by Athens' "imperial democrats." By extending the benefits of this reconstruction to artists, craftsmen, merchants — indeed to the whole Athenian economy — the architectural venture promised to weaken the power of the oligarchical party by displacing its former aristocratic grip upon artistic patronage. At the same time, under the direction of Pericles' friend, Phidias, the emblematic power of the new art was consciously intended to surpass all of Athens' past, if not that of all Greece. The new Acropolis would then, on grounds both of economics and art, solidify support for the new and exceedingly fragile democracy. More than a little awareness of the political stakes was involved in Plutarch's dramatic account of the final Thucydides-Pericles encounter over the rebuilding programme.[11] The upshot, however, sadly confirms Parkinson's law: the architectural art succeeded beyond all expectations in dazzling the world for all time, but the expected political stabilization was cruelly short-lived.

The conjunction of superlative architecture with political threats and instability does not end here. At many other points, this peculiarly ironical relation between architectural strength and political disorder is revealed:

One thinks immediately of . . . the mighty works of

> Roman architecture that arose during the century-long
> period of disruption that extends from the time of
> Caracalla to that of Constantine; of Justinian's great
> church that was begun only six weeks after the
> destruction of an earlier building in the course of city-
> wide rioting that threatened to oust the emperor from his
> throne; of the magnificent architectural defense of the
> institution of monasticism that was made in the twelfth
> century when that institution was already declining and in
> constant need of reform; of the connection between the
> outbreak of the reformation and the rebuilding of St.
> Peter's Basilica on a grander scale than any that man had
> previously envisioned; and of other examples too
> numerous to mention.[12]

This use of architecture to stamp out schism, heresy, rebellion, or general political instability ought to add an intriguing dimension to our understanding both of politics and this special art. Though this relation has not to my knowledge ever figured prominently in any political theory or in contemporary theories of architecture, it may turn out to be an especially pregnant signpost of social and political change: the architectural splendour itself pointing darkly toward the onset of mature institutional malaise. Careful work in cultural and political history will be needed to help refine and amplify on these preliminary insights, but whatever the precise nature of the outcome, we can confidently expect that further studies into the interplay between politics and architecture will awaken political theory into what has been up to now, a largely neglected area of concern.

Architecture and the Public Realm

Yet the special "public" significance of architecture is not exhausted in the foregoing treatment of its political character. In fact, ever since the Greeks taught us that the "public" constitutes a special and more exacting sense of the political, we have been able to understand and distinguish for example authentically "public" architecture from the mere funerary works of autocratic political systems. In this respect, architectural theory reruns the West's political weighting of Greece over Egypt, Athens over Thebes. For in terms of an art truly integrated into the *via publica*, the architecture of classical Athens has always been decisive, the very picture of a whole citizenry defining and embellishing its public space. This democratic, if not less stately conception of architecture, has essentially formed our ideal vision of this special public art.

Of course, such a vision was beclouded with considerable ambiguity. Athenian politics was in many respects seriously deficient: apart from the large section of her population formally excluded from the public world, aristocratic leadership exercised by the scions of prominent families dominated the public realm.[13] In her external relations too, Athens, after the Peace of Kallias, leaned more strongly toward imperial than quietly democractic intentions. These unpleasant contradictions might have marred the architectural glory of Athens, were her buildings still not the finest approximation to "public" building we have ever seen. Nor is this fact *simply* because they were built and used by the citizens themselves. The architectural history of the Acropolis shows with what deliberate self-consciousness the people of Athens affixed a new "public" claim upon them. The rebuilding of the Acropolis took place at a critical political juncture in Athenian history, the struggle between the "oligarchical" and "democratic" parties finally came to a head. This struggle, appropriately enough, centered around the nature, financing, and meaning of the Acropolis rebuilding programme. It was here that the oligarchical party led by Thucydides decided to take their stand against Pericles and the radical democrats. Upon that struggle, so colourfully related by Plutarch, rested the fate of this uniquely "public" architecture.[14]

The debate began with two principal objections advanced by the oligarchical party: the sheer extravagance of the rebuilding and the dishonour brought upon Athens by the highhanded financing of it. Since the massive architectural venture could only be mounted by diverting Delian League funds contributed by all Greek states for their common war against Persia, the issues were carefully designed both to expose the uncomfortable connection between Athenian democracy and imperialism and to set up the radical's leader, Pericles, for ostracism. Pericles' reply sidestepped the imperial question by claiming that so long as the Athenians provided their allies with a continuing defence against Persia, they "owed no account to the allies for the money," concentrating instead on the twin benefits of the programme: economic benefits at once for virtually everyone in Athens, and eternal glory for their state thereafter.[15] With such blandishments, the outcome was inevitable. But although the oligarchy was outvoted and Thucydides himself shortly thereafter sent into exile, his words as dramatized by Plutarch nonetheless have a cranky but decidedly prophetic ring:

> Greece cannot but resent it as an insufferable affront, and
> consider herself to be tyrannised over openly, when she
> sees the treasure, which was contributed by her upon a
> necessity for the war, wantonly lavished out by us upon
> our city, to gild her all over, and to adorn and set her

> forth, as it were some vain woman, hung around with
> precious stones and figures and temples, which cost a
> world of money.[16]

Many writers have acknowledged that it is only in the years following the mid-point of the fifth century B.C. that this crucial conflict between the demos and oligoi begins to "take the form of a deep division" and that Athenian imperialism is firmly put in place.[17] Although Pericles clearly exercised powerful leadership on these issues, the public itself was deliberating and voting on its own future, with the rebuilding of the temples a crucial part both of the people's own democratic political stabilization at home and of imperial pretensions abroad. Thus the architecture did not simply serve as the occasion for debate over these larger issues. Once completed, the architecture was expected to establish the new Athenian regime as the leader of all Greece. Her allies and subjects were expected, for example, to develop Athenian religious cults, to participate each year in the Panathenic Processional to the Acropolis, and to acknowledge Athen's cultural and religious leadership.[18]

The jealously guarded public status of the architectural building on and near the Acropolis during the latter part of the fifth century B.C. can only be grasped against a customary backdrop of aristocratic patronage. Prior to Ephialtes' democratic reforms, most of the public buildings erected after the Persian sacking of Athens were built and paid for exclusively by well-to-do aristocratic families: the Stoa Poikile by Peisinax, the development of the Academy and south wall of the Acropolis by Kimon, the Temple of Artemis of Good Counsel by Themistocles. It was only the political shift toward democracy that the principle of a whole people's control and patronage over its public space was vigorously asserted. As Russell Meiggs puts it:

> It was the demos in its assembly that should decide what
> public buildings were to be built, and who should build
> them. Commissioners elected by the people should
> supervise the progress of the work and its financing. Their
> accounts should be controlled by public auditors chosen
> by the people, and should be publicly summarized on
> stone and set up where all who wished could see them.[19]

The public's claim upon its architecture was, in fact, put to the test later as the burden of the rebuilding programme began to mount. Plutarch recounts that Pericles, on hearing a chorus of public grumbling:

asked them, [the Athenians] in the assembly if they thought that the expense was heavy, and when they said "very heavy indeed", he said: "Let the expense then be not yours but mine and these buildings that we are dedicating will have my name inscribed on them". The response was unequivocal: 'They cried out that the expenditure must come from public money and that in guiding their building policy he should spare nothing.'[20]

Although this resort to architecture on the grand scale did not bring democratic Athens the assured political pre-eminence which she sought, but may instead have helped precipitate her downfall, this vision of public architecture has ever since remained an exemplary spectacle. Not even this architecture's whitewashing of imperialism has been able to dislodge the special public character of Athenian architecture nor weaken its place in architectural history and theory. In the whole history of architecture, for example, only the Gothic cathedral even remotely offers as powerful an iconographic symbol of a whole people united in its architecture. The special institutional interests and restricted political foundation of mediaeval architecture makes it, however, an unequal rival to Athens.[21] This point suggests an extraordinarily profound connection between architecture and the public order, a relation which, once grasped, can help us understand the nature of our modern crisis in architecture and politics.

The Fate of Architecture and Politics in the Modern World

In a curious sense, our own period simultaneously bears out the force of the previous maxims on architecture and politics and suggests the deranged pattern of their relations. Hence, an architectural interpretation of our own time reveals the same intense connection between the establishment and architecture as in earlier times, but radically overturns its former stately, public character. Even a casual glimpse at the skylines of our cities shows how thoroughly stately and religious edifices are now dwarfed by the gleaming structures of the modern corporate capitalist elite. These buildings, after all, constitute the architectural showcase of modernism, the typical, privatized although institutional artifacts of our own times. This architectural displacement of the political and public realm has had a decisive and ultimately demoralizing effect upon architecture and politics. In view of our earlier analysis, this is understandable. But the deeper tragedy of this practical severance of architecture and the public realm consists in an impoverishment of theory. Thinkers in politics and architecture alike have for some time now lost touch with the thematic understandings developed earlier in this paper.[22]

They have lost sight of their mutual dependency. Any revitalization of the status of architecture or the public realm will thus depend on remembering and restoring their essential connections.

Although the roots of this crisis lie deeply embedded in liberalism and its stress upon the private and the social, it is not accidental that modern architecture makes its appearance at precisely the time when the western capitalist order has reached its mature and corporate form. In the United States, Germany, and France, the architectural pioneers of modernism begin to develop and expound the principles of modern architecture in order to give expression to our own age's now dominant bourgeois "spirit" and institutions. Although volumes have been written about these revolutionary artists and the special properties of their art, architectural historians have not had much penchant or training for examining its deeper economic and political significance. Indeed, analysts of the theory of modern architecture have for the most part deliberately eschewed that kind of realism and indulged themselves instead in the extravagant idealism of the heroes of modern architecture themselves.[23]

Part of that idealism has consisted in the ready acceptance of a romantic but ultimately bland de-politicized theory both of older and contemporary architecture. Thus, on the historical plane, instead of studying the actual exciting connections between architecture and politics in past ages, too many architectural theorists ever since Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc have made the raising up of great architecture look like a spontaneous and mystical product of each historical "age" and its "people." From the vantage point of our own time, the same theorists have attempted to subsume the special political and institutional quality of most modern architecture in some vague "spirit" of modernism presumably shared by all people of this age. This de-ratiocination of experience has been part of the dubious and lamentable legacy of Hegelian historicism, which had overawed the principal architectural theorists of the nineteenth century like Ruskin, Pugin, and Viollet-le-Duc and which, through them, has so thoroughly penetrated twentieth-century architectural theory.[24]

If, however, we refuse to go along with any simple-minded equation of the spirit of the age with the interests of the patrons of architecture — if we instead ask the same questions about modern architecture that we have formerly done of the politics of earlier architectural expressions — a much more revealing picture of it can be had. In particular, with a firmer grip on the institutional roots of modern architecture, we will have a better understanding of its politics, of its inherent limits to be the noble world architecture which its leaders sought to make it, and of the reasons for its precipitate decline since the 1960's. Ultimately, such an analysis promises to give us a better insight into the weakening significance and endurance of architecture as a *public* art.

The institutional shift of modern architecture from public to private

building can be seen both in the early architectural artifacts of modernism and in its polemics and theory. From whatever country the modern movement takes root, buildings arise which henceforth will serve as architectural icons of our age: office and apartment towers, department stores, factories, private dwellings for the bourgeois avant-garde, mass schools, churches, concert halls, and of course "housing blocks," — all with a characteristic "machine age" look. This style was the highwater mark of the industrial revolution, when the architect was compelled to come to terms with mass housing and the realities of the labouring world within the terms of an industrial motif, while at the same giving the new ruling classes who, in effect, has sponsored this new world order, their own characteristic architectural defence and status. Indeed, underneath all of modern architecture's revolutionary rhetoric concerning the phoniness of commercial interests wrapping themselves in architectural neoclassicism, lay a hard-headed realism about the transformed ruling order and the duty and power of the new corporate classes to break free from feudal or aristocratic dress. Nothing quite dramatized that transformation better than the skyscraper, which in its economy, purity, rationalism, and power announced the triumph of the bourgeois age. However, if history is any guide, such an architectural flowering in the full ripeness of bourgeois civilization would not necessarily bode well for such a world order. On the contrary, it would merely bear witness to the immense dangers and contradictions against which this mature architecture was directed.

If the writings of the early modern architectural leaders are considered, the shift of architectural attention toward this new commercial elite is unmistakable, even if it is shot through with contradictions and concerns between the architectural *ideal* and the *actual* conditions of bourgeois rule. Thus, despite virtually endless denunciations of the greed and misery engendered by a capitalist society, all of the chief artists of the modernist movement in architecture tilted decisively toward an idealized corporate world of business tycoon, bureaucrat, and "scientific" manager.[25] This tendency is clear enough, for example, in the pristine reductionism of a Mies van der Rohe skyscraper, or in the ideal city models of Le Corbusier, where life is altogether given over to an exaltation of work and its elite. It is apparent too in their rabid enthusiasm for machine-age, mass produced products like steel railway cars, ships and even tanks and airplanes, but it is most obvious in the architect's blatant appeals to the capitalist to take up this architecture or face "overthrow." While denouncing profitability as a norm, Le Corbusier and many others proceeded to defend their architectural plans as a "profit-making form of organization" whose iconographic power would establish the "eminence" of such families as the Rockefellers, "the great masters of economic destiny."[26] Of course, when the tide seemed to turn against the capitalist order, especially during the depression days, or when this elite

seemed to pay insufficient attention to the architectural leaders' advice, most of them were ready to put the "new age" look to the service of the communists, the fascists, or almost any centralized bureaucratic elite. But the essentially privatized roots of the architecture remained intact nonetheless. Here then was an architecture as sensitive as ever to establishment interests in society but, which though deeply intoxicated by the spell of Athens, remained tragically cut off from the public realm. This separation of course casts contemporary architecture into precisely the same crisis condition as our politics.

Ever since the eighteenth century, political thinkers have understood and viewed with more and more alarm the relentless erosion and absorption of the public realm. Indeed, almost no other concern so dominates the intellectual imagination of contemporary political theory.[27] It is the *nature* of the crisis in these two related public arts that must be understood in the light of such reflections. Such understanding entails *remembering* associations which have ceased to hold in our own time and *using* such memory to help redress weaknesses in the theory and practice of each art. Political theory has already advanced much further along this road of re-examination than has architectural theory, and ought therefore to provide a particularly fruitful basis for rethinking the fundamentals of architectural theory at the point of impasse in modernism. In fact, this body of theory together with the recovery of the *historical* relations of architecture, politics and the public realm along the lines attempted earlier, ought to show the necessarily weakened and problematical status both of modern architecture and modern architectural theory.

The first important task is to grasp the implications of the earlier argument about architecture as an establishment art in the context of our own time, and to see the obstacles thus presented to any architecture of *enduring public* significance. This discovery is not simply a matter of recognizing the privatized nature of a modern political economy, but of seeing the institutional politics of our architecture aimed at subverting the larger activity of politics and the public realm itself. When this phenomenon is set aside the deeper and traditional link between architecture and the public world which since Athens has been so celebrated in architectural history, the nature of this crisis can be seen to consist in an irremediable war within architecture itself. Its *establishment* role (in former times kept within more or less circumscribed "public" institutions) has now broken free from its public moorings without, however, losing its political Parkinson-like character.[28] The eradication of the truly political takes place in virtually every leading architect's drawing board models of a rationalized twentieth century. Neither the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, nor any other founder of the principles of architectural modernism made room in their social models for any public

center, for institutions for political speech and action, or even for political leadership as such. Instead, as illustrated in Le Corbusier's City of Tomorrow, for example, all of men's activities revolve around a privatized world of eating, sleeping, and physical exercise in or near the family domain, a world of busy labouring in splendid glass skyscrapers, and the to-and-fro of transit. Such an architectural jewel, from the heyday of the international movement in the 1920's, shows that the *public* role of architecture had already fallen on bad times.

The same kind of conclusion is arrived at by Charles Jencks after an extensive review of the entire modern movement in architecture:

> One of the conclusions to be drawn from a study of recent architecture is the problematic nature of architecture itself. Not only is it thrown into doubt by those who would replace it with a "social service", or engineering, but it is questioned even by successfully practising architects. The reason is not hard to find. It concerns the consumer societies for which architecture is built and the undeniable banality of their building tasks and commissions. At present the most talented architects are designing beautiful candle shops and boutiques for the sophisticated, office buildings for soap and whiskey monopolies, playthings for the rich of Monte Carlo and technical gadgetry for the Worlds Fairs. Such designs are in every formal and technical way provocative and carried through with great integrity, but they can never transcend the limited social and political goals for which they were created.[29]

Given the political economy of modern architecture — its dependence upon wealthy but limited institutions, and its complete inability to draw on the public realm for its strength and durability — Jencks' judgment concerning the ultimate banality of modern architectural art has to signal a crisis both for the modern architects and their patrons. For the architect, it announces their failure to present compelling icons reflecting our alleged *zeitgeist*; for the patrons, it speaks of the political limits of architectural art and announces the onset of Parkinson's sixth law. Although Jencks does not situate his verdict on modern architecture in the larger world of politics which ultimately makes the verdict possible, it is no accident that his views on the failure of modern architecture, together with a chorus of others, takes place during and after the 1960's when the bureaucratic and capitalist order is subject to sustained attack

and demands for a deeper public life are advanced. In other words, the political stabilization sought by the bourgeois patrons of modern architecture is at least as dubious as that sought by earlier architectural elites. The skyscraper is unlikely to compel long-term awe and respect for the corporate and administrative interests which it both houses and reflects, nor will it therefore determine the order of the world. Instead, the memory of the public realm, celebrated in a truly public architecture, is likely to go on haunting our age.

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Notes

1. Charles Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973.

2. Paul and Percival Goodman, *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and of Life*, New York: Vintage, 1947.

3. See for example, Donald Egbert, *Social Radicalism and the Arts*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

4. I am especially indebted to the work of Norris Kelly Smith for first bringing this notion to my attention and for opening my eyes to its possibilities. His works will be cited as appropriate later on.

5. As noted immediately above, this stricture can hardly be brought to bear on the architectural historian, Norris Kelly Smith, whose work has been principally aimed at correcting such oversights in modern architectural thought.

6. Indeed, as I will go on to argue later, it is precisely this theoretical confusion about the role and purposes of architecture which fatally weakens modern architectural theory and practise. Since architecture has historically almost invariably been restricted to what is most *public* and *significant* in each society, its *meaning* as architecture has also necessarily depended on more than its undoubted aesthetic properties.

7. Norris Kelly Smith, *Frank Lloyd Wright: A Study in Architectural Content*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966, p. 9.

8. C. Northcote Parkinson, *Parkinson's Laws*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1957.

9. No one could quite outdo the Egyptian pharaohs for the sheer vanity of architectural patron, as reams of self indulgent praise in the hieroglyphs shows. But underneath all of this, the spectre of attrition, of political and military breakdown — indeed of the ignominious shadow of the grave robbers — is never entirely absent. In fact, it would seem that the more that spectre came to haunt the ruling classes, the more grandiose and obsessive became the architecture.

10. As Hausen's book also indicates, the character of this art, together with painting and sculpture, is invariably conservative and institutional — especially developed by artists who live dependent on temple or court workshops. The convention that dictated monumental frontality for the pharaoh and other notables and yet permitted some measure of naturalism in the treatment of other persons of less exalted rank was a *political* and *class* convention: art

subordinated to establishment interests. The ideological function of art is easily recognized when Aknaton's political break with the old order quickly lead to a much more consciously naturalist art for the court, an art just as quickly suppressed when his political revolution was crushed. Arnold Hausen, *The Social History of Art*, Vol. 1, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951.

11. See an extended discussion of this issue in Section II, "Architecture and the Public Realm", to follow.

12. Kelly Smith, p. 9.

13. See especially W. Robert Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.

14. Something very similar to the Plutarch account is now accepted by leading scholars of this period. It should be noted, however, that in practical and political importance, the agora clearly outdistanced the Acropolis as Athenian government moved from monarchy, by way of aristocracy towards democracy. It was here where the vital public life of Athens was conducted and where Athenians could meet and talk within or beside the stoas on whose walls were depicted heroic events of the city. It is principally with the Acropolis rebuilding programme, however, that the issue of a public architecture is thoroughly thrashed out and resolved in favour of the demos. See R.E. Wycherley, *How the Greeks Built Cities*, London: Macmillan and Co., 1949, esp. p. 7.

15. This argument would have had little force with Athens' allies since peace had already been established with Persia prior to the rebuilding. Of course Athens had suffered most with the wholesale destruction of her temples earlier in 479 B.C., but this did not wholly justify Athens' present imperial demands. Careful scrutiny of the tribute lists throughout the 440's and later show Athens' continuing demands for tribute as well as the resistance put up by many other Greek city states.

16. Plutarch, *Lives*, London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1910, p. 237.

17. See W. Robert Connor, p. 63.

18. See Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, Oxford at the Clarendon Press: 1972.

19. Russell Meiggs, "The Political Implications of the Parthenon — [1963]" in Vincent J. Bruno, ed., *The Parthenon*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1974, p. 110.

20. *Ibid*, p. 109.

21. This has not been sufficiently understood by modern architectural theory which, since the romantic revivals of the nineteenth century, has underplayed the *politics* of architecture and blurred the distinctions between the architecture of institutional elites and that of peoples. This has been helped by its fascination with historicism — with analytic categories of unified "ages" and "spirits" rather than with the contradictions of actual political economies. See my unpublished paper, "Political Theory and Modern Architecture".

22. Even the pioneering work of Paul and Percival Goodman, by stressing the utopian character of modern architectural thinking, could not put this relation of architecture and state as forcefully as was necessary.

23. Nothing illustrates this better than Siegfried Giedion's classic work, *Space, Time, and Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1941), used as standard text in schools of architecture until recently. Modern architect's fascination with heroics and its relation to the historicist theme is treated in David Milne, "The Artist as Political Hero", *Political Theory*, November, 1980. There is, of course, a further need to develop a history and explanation of this theory — of modern architecture's sociology of knowledge, metaphysics, and political economy, but that would move us further afield into other complex matters. What I will try to do here with this article is simply to broadly sketch its characteristic cast of mind and point out important implications and consequences.

24. This is not the place for a detailed historical explanation of this Hegelian influence in art history and theory, nor for the precise chronicling of the stages by which it came to conquer modern architectural thinking. This is an exceedingly complicated and lengthy story which has only in part been taken up by recent scholarship. The roots of this development are only lightly touched upon by David Watkin's, *Morality and Architecture* (Oxford University Press, 1979), but its baneful effects on modern writers in architecture are ruthlessly exposed.

25. Probably the only major exception to this rule would be Frank Lloyd Wright whose anarchistic leaning set him apart from the other leaders of the modern movement. See my unpublished manuscript, "Frank Lloyd Wright and a Theory of Democratic Architecture". Yet even here, Wright was frequently drawn away from his romantic preoccupations with domestic architecture toward ideal visions of the corporate world with the Larkin Building in Buffalo, the Johnson's wax building in Racine, the Bartlesville Tower in Oklahoma, or most whimsically, in his drafting board model of a "mile high skyscraper"!

26. See Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City*, translated by Pamela Knight, Eleanor Levieux, Derek Coltman. New York: Orion Press, 1964, and Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals were White*, translated by Francis E. Hyslop, New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1964. It was universally expected of course, that the amelorization of the human condition built into each of the architects' plans (whatever their obvious differences) would not only resolve the principal contradictions of the age, but usher in a new paradiscal spirit. See Norris Kelly Smith, "Millenary Folly: The Failure of an Eschatology" in N.K. Smith, *On Art and Architecture in the Modern World*, Watkins Glen, N.Y.: American Life Foundation for the University of Victoria, British Columbia, 1971.

27. No one has pondered this matter with more power and clarity than Hannah Arendt, though the theme is taken up by thinkers of virtually every political hue.

28. Of course, to the extent that architecture in many earlier societies also tended to reify a much more exclusive and limited sense of the "political" and the "public" than that of Athens, it too suffered from the limits imposed by the nature of the regime. However, no earlier order quite dismantled the state connection so thoroughly.

29. Jencks, p. 371.

ESCAPES FROM THE CULTURAL PRISON-HOUSE

Ioan Davies

I

In *Commissariat of Enlightenment*, Sheila Fitzpatrick's study of educational and artistic policies in the first four years of the Russian Revolution, there is an account of Lenin making "an unscheduled speech" at the first all-Russian Congress on extra-mural education (9 May 1919).

> "I regard," he said, all intellectual fantasies of 'proletarian culture' with ruthless hostility. To these fantasies I oppose the ABC of organization. The task of proletarian discipline is to distribute bread and coal in such a way that there is a careful attitude to each unit of coal and each unit of bread . . . If we solve this very simple, elementary problem, we shall win . . . The basic task of 'proletarian culture' is proletarian organization."[1]

With this organizational sledgehammer Lenin demonstrated the extremely fragile equipment that Marxism as practice brought to the formulation of anything resembling a cultural policy.

Although the experiences of the Bolsheviks served to highlight the absence of a cultural policy, they also marked the beginning of a Marxist discussion on culture which has only in the past two decades presented something of a coherent theoretical debate. Lenin's disdain for "proletarian culture" was, of course, a distrust of the intellectualizing of the Revolution through art as much as it was a campaign against the Infantile Disorder of the Anarcho-Syndicalist left. But his description of coal, bread and organization as culture was equally an attempt to reclaim the term "culture" from those who had appropriated it as "High Culture." By the very choice of their cultural policies, the Bolsheviks exposed the problem of having any Marxist definition of culture. Lunarcharsky, as Commissar of Education, discovered in a practical way that culture was not easily compartmentalized. Even if culture was defined in the conventional terms of the arts, education, the mass media or beliefs, Narkompos, the Ministry of Enlightenment, was not in control of everything. Other ministers or departments controlled propaganda, public monuments, religion and even publishing, and the issues of whether creative activity should be directed by the state, whether it should emerge

spontaneously out of the new revolutionary situation, or indeed whether it should be defined at all, emerged as questions that were central to the Revolution's own sense of itself. In addition, there were the conflicting meta-diachronic interpretations of the growth of "Enlightenment" — from the metaphysical apocalyptic hopes of, say, Alecsander Blok, to the promise of more equality and at least an absence of poverty that the workers articulated in their soviets and which Lenin addressed in all his speeches. Because the Enlightenment reached Russia 150 years after the rest of Europe, the clash of definitions and interpretations was greater, and Enlightenment itself barely had time to assert itself before its limits had been set by organization.[2] The fluidity of search for the definitions and practices that might take on meaning under the concept of culture, had a stronger definition imposed on them. The revolution of sensibilities and alternatives was institutionalized. Forms were frozen and utopias situated. Culture ceased to be bacteriological; rather it became horticultural. The task of the Revolution was to husband the slender plant it had grown. It was to be a culture without risk, experiment or conflict.

This historical moment is worth recording because the issues raised in the Bolshevik Dawn were not resolved by it; in fact the Revolution opened the floodgates of theorizing and the construction of practical alternatives. Beyond that, Lenin's cry of pain at hearing culture-vultures remaking His Revolution has a familiar urgency, and a historical legacy: "The philosophers have continued to interpret the world . . . the point is to change it." Sixty-one years after Lenin's attack on Protetcult (which the Bolsheviks with Krupskaya's philistine energy, successfully transformed into a propaganda machine) and 150 years after Hegel thought that he had finally abolished theorizing, the conundrum of culture has been puzzled over more than ever, and the left has been most prominent in the exercise.

II

Linguistics was one of the areas that Stalin left free from censorship (after he assumed Lenin's mantle) on the grounds that it could not "be ranked either among the bases or the superstructures."[3] It was a bold gesture which unfortunately did not rescue formalism from the limbo into which both Lenin and Trotski had cast it, though Futurism, transferred to Germany, lived on in the work of Piscator and Brecht. Formalism had already adapted linguistics as the ultimate metaphor. Trotski was surely right: "An apparent objectivism, based on accidental secondary and inadequate characteristics, leads inevitably to the worst subjectivism. In the case of the formalist school it leads to the superstition of the word."[4] Indeed, the word or the cultural artifact dominated the consciousness of the early intellectual revolutionaries and in many aspects it is easy to see why. The crucial issue which the revolution faced

was one which had been evident in all philosophy and political practice since the eighteenth century; to assess what of past knowledge was relevant to a dramatically changed situation. Inevitably confronting this issue the artifacts of knowledge — written documents, paintings, sculpture, architecture (or, rather, buildings), music (or, rather, scores) and film — would be subjected to scrutiny. Perhaps inevitably also language — apparently the one uniquely human activity — would become the metaphor for that exploration. But Trotski and Lenin were both right in seeing that linguistics, as a science, was hardly adequate in coming to terms with knowledge as culture. Language was empirically and cognitively only part of the problem. Text could only be seen in context. The major issues in culture were the lived-through relationships, the imposition of codes on an everyday making sense, and the rapidly shifting cognitive and artifactual sense of time. Trotsky, the marxist Gnostic Jew, was well aware of the perils and advantages of reifying "the word." Had not the Torah imposed the word as law only to see it negated by practice? Was not the Revolution a leap into the dark; a dialectical leap based on a Pascalian wager? Trotski's *History of the Russian Revolution* is a monument to that wager. "Each of the great revolutions marked off a new stage of the bourgeois society, and new forms of consciousness for its classes. Just as France stepped over the reformation, so Russia stepped over formal democracy. The Russian revolutionary party, which was to place its stamp on a whole epoch, sought an expression for the tasks of the revolution neither in the Bible nor in secularized Christianity called 'pure' democracy, but in the material relations of the social classes."[5]

In his *Legitimation of Belief*, Ernest Gellner takes this leap of development as the major point in the analysis of the sense of change, a change which is both empirical (more cities, more people, more genres) and also cognitive. The sense of change requires new equipment *and* a weeding out of the old. The formalists wanted to *contain* the text in terms of artistic autonomy. Revolution exposes the inadequacies of that endeavour. As Gellner writes:

> Fundamental intellectual endeavour, philosophical thought, starts not from a revelation, or a premise, or a *tabula rasa*. The *tabula rasa* is a good methodological device, but has no relation to a real historic starting point. The real starting point was a justified sense of chaos, of cognitive breakdown. Of course, had there not been a previous more or less viable structure, however questionable its bases, there would have been no mind, no anguish to initiate that endeavour. Thought begins in the collapsing of an old order.[6]

The tension between the organizational sense of what has to be and the literary sense of what has been produces the sense of what might be. This article, for a good reason, begins with a moment of our intellectual endeavour, rather than with the ossification of our past records. Although we have to live our mundane lives through their definitions of us (whether they are paintings, ideologies or social structures), in the last resort we have to live through our own sense of making it. Ernest Gellner again: "We are bound to consider our morale *par provision* and our world *par provision* jointly. We choose our world through a kind of cognitive *morale*, and our ethics through the kind of concepts which make sense in the world we choose."[7]

In many ways structuralism — and hence linguistics and formalism — was trapped by the occasion of its own creation. The preoccupation with sign-systems became an occasion for freezing action. Linguistic theory and its attendant models became the crutches on which Enlightenment man could support himself. He could talk about everything from computers to folklore, James Joyce, mental institutions, and the face of Garbo.

But what could be done to incorporate such analysis into a theory of action and practice? It is perhaps important to start with Frederic Jameson's apparent resolution to the problems posed by our linguistic incarceration, because it suggests the road that we have travelled since 1919. Having surveyed the heritages of formalism, structuralism and hermeneutics, Jameson's conclusion is that we must view truth as a transcoding, as a translation of one code to another. He writes:

> Such a formula would have the advantage — in Derrida's sense — of freeing structural analysis from the myth of structure itself; of some permanent and spatial-like organization of the object. It would place that 'object' between parenthesis, and consider the analytic practice as 'nothing but' an operation in time . . . The hermeneutic here foreseen would, by disclosing the presence of pre-existing codes and models and by reemphasizing the place of the analyst himself, re-open text and analytic process to all the winds of history.[8]

Jameson is right, in one sense, if we accept linguistics as the basis for understanding culture, and if we recognize that the rise of linguistics is a search for a scientific basis for understanding anything. "Semiology," wrote Roland Barthes, "is a science of forms, since it studies significations apart from their content."[9] But what is culture if not content? The problem with making the study of culture "scientific" is that we run the risk of robbing it of

those crucial elements that give it its meaning — making sense, husbanding, destroying, reformulating. We translate it into codes by which ultimately we feel trapped. In art and literature, the codes so dominate our understanding that we even create with their dominance implanted in our consciousness. The leading linguistic theorists are probably more aware of the problem than anyone else. As Barthes puts it, "Semiology, once its limits are settled is not a metaphysical trap: it is a science among others, necessary but not sufficient."[10] But Barthes is not the average semiologist, just as Freud is not the average psychoanalyst. For the acolytes the system *is* reality. Semiology becomes the "metaphysical trap". Form takes over from content.

The important lesson that linguists have taught us over the past sixty years is that our lives can be measured neutrally, that what we say may not be important except to us, and that classification and distinctions are part of our everyday realities. What they have not taught us is that language changes according to our everyday experience, that the syntax matters less than the sense, or that history is more than "a cry in the street."

The central issue that Marx raised about culture was that our everyday making sense was confounded by not encountering the real, everyday world. Linguistics as a strategy for analysis projects the everyday world as a torment that can only be encountered in Form. The form matters because it represents our non-sense.

The battle for sense will only be won by recognizing that the interpretations of our own activities have to be surmounted and transcended through a clear perception of our reality. We need to pay attention less to linguistics than to language as a lived-through reality. Eric Patridge's *Historical Slang*[11] is more alive with ourselves than Saussure's metaphorical and schematic appropriation of our sensibilities. What we have to return to is not systems but the occasions that gave rise to them. Not Psychoanalysis but Freud's Vienna, not Semiotics but Roland Barthes's Paris, not Christianity but the anguish of living in Roman Palestine, are what matter. In other words, to recognize that the contexts giving rise to the interpretation are more important than the interpretations imposed as a last resort on these situations by people so concerned to solve, once and for all, the problem. The solution is invariably partial. We should recognize that the frameworks frame us. Our liberation is personal, social, intellectual and political. We escape by recognizing the necessity of losing our supports.

Culture — as the formalists demonstrated[12] — involves both a coming to terms with the inherited artifacts and documents, and — as the phenomenologists tried to show — living through and transcending the present. We make our own culture, but the making is not entirely of our choosing. Formalism and structuralism supply that sense of restriction, phenomenology the escape routes. Culture is knowledge both in the sense that

it involves the recognition of other peoples' knowing and in that it is cognizant of the importance of our own re-knowing. We were here before but not exactly in the same place nor with the same people. Our sense of hope is contained in those revolutionary moments when a new world seemed to be offered; our sense of despondency that it was instantly re-made into a formal, structured sameness. Between our phenomenological hopes and our intuitive feeling that nothing will change because we need to have the props to lean on, lies the dichotomy of culture. Ernest Gellner's commentary on Marx's *Thesis on Feuerbach* is surely right:

> Our culture is not a solution, it is a problem. We need some way of looking at it without doing so on its own terms ... No doubt there is some *hubris* in this. Karl Marx was amongst those who noticed this. In the most interesting of the *Thesis on Feuerbach* he observes 'the doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator must himself be educated. Hence this doctrine necessarily arrives at dividing society into two parts, of which one towers above society . . . The coincidence of changing circumstances and of human activity can only be conceived and rationally understood as revolutionizing practice. The educator must himself be educated; the criteria which are to guide assessment and change can hardly be drawn from the unregenerate, problematic order.[13]

And yet, in a fundamental way, it is that order that we use to make sense of the present. We build out of the ashes of chaos.

The initial problem is definitional. Posing the existence of culture as if it were something to be isolated, analysed and dissected clearly raises conceptual problems which the rich outcrop of works available has done little to resolve. But in large measure a tendency in positivistic social theory to relate a segment of social "behaviour" with a segment of "culture" in order to establish a connecting link (e.g. social mobility and the language of schoolchildren or political decision-making and regional culture) is even more problematic in that we are frequently unsure of the significance of the conclusions for an understanding of either social morphology or cultural practice.

The discussion of culture ranges from symbolics to values, from ideologies to language, from process to structures. In studies of culture we consequently note attempts at grasping totalities of interrelationships, as well as specifics of genre, from examining the commonality of symbols to the uniqueness of cultural moments or breaks. Much of the dynamic of the controversies during this century has come from the attempt, following Saussure's linguistics, at separating on the one hand, diachronic and synchronic interpretations of culture with the counter-emphasis of treating the time of the now as either positing a major epistemological break with the past or as being in debt to a historical legacy which the present cannot or should not shake off. The theoretical schools, whatever their nomenclature, have been acutely conscious of these dilemmas and have offered different solutions to them. For example, even within the Frankfurt school with its apparent emphasis on diachrony and the wedding of culture with the superdetermination of ideology, we have the work of Benjamin — followed in part by Adorno — which emphasizes at once a frozen synchrony and a processional history, fractured by Apocalypse. Benjamin's writing and Adorno's *Minima Moralia* offer a series of vignettes, both structuralist and didactic, which are echoed by the diachronic undertones of some of Roland Barthes's critiques of myths. Barthes's own attempt at making a distinction between a science of literature or signs and literary criticism both poses a timeless methodology for understanding symbolic relations and, at the same time, allows for shifts in evaluation made by different writers over time.

The problem of the analysis of culture centres not only on the reconstruction of models (with their usual metaphorical or analogical traps) which are both synchronically and diachronically heuristic, but also in the reading (or transcoding in Greimas's term)[14] that is necessary for translating whatever homologies are taken as pertinent. But such a task will not be achieved at the conceptual level alone. As Raymond Williams's life-work indicates, analysis will only be validated by an ongoing debate and encounter with the manifestations of culture, past and present, in an encounter which refuses to be trapped into either the purely didactic or to be shunted into the abstrusely analytical, operating instead as it were, on the knife-edge of both.

One of the temptations of semiology — in part because of its claims to universality and scientific objectivity — has been to take all manifestations of culture as equally worthy of analysis. This tendency is paralleled by the counter-tendency of work originating in the Frankfurt school, and from Lukacs and Gramsci, to see culture as necessarily an aspect of the power structure related to ideology, and therefore inevitably requiring a ranking of significance. The sins of semiology (apart from its anti-historical bias) are absolute relativity and a refusal to offer judgement; the sins of Marxist phenomenology are a disregard of forms of culture which do not fit into a hierarchy of values. Adorno's dismissals of jazz and film are notorious

examples of the latter. One of the inevitable empirical consequences of this dichotomy has been that semiology and structuralism generated a range of studies on newer forms of art (film, rock music, science fiction), while much critical theory has dealt with communication in general, with the ideological nature of literary and art criticism, or with the analysis of classical music and major literary works. In formulating an agenda for the study of contemporary culture we are therefore conscious of the need to explore persistently the Now while at the same time placing it in a context which compels an evaluation with other practices and other dimensions. By pursuing signs we discover anything which is significant; by pursuing value we challenge the significant as not being significant. And yet the persistence of signs — the constant rediscovery of the vitality of human creativity — compels us to test the values of that which we take as eternal. In its gut, marxist critical theory recognized that there is a dilemma that requires solution; in its head, it recognized the alternative posture of mental fracture, that relativity and the absolute are hardly compatible, while the logic of the situation and the meaning of time are contradictory stances brooking no easy solution.

The Russian Revolution showed that the conjunction of the imposition of definitions by a regime with its own objectives could be at variance both with the making sense of the everyday realities by workers and intellectuals alike and with the growth of technological knowledge. In the factories, managers were allowed to be innovative; in the studios artists because of the fear that form might dictate content, were not. The Revolution turned both "formalism" (the empire of Technique) and "futurism" (the worship of Tomorrow) into obscenities. And yet curiously, by so doing it enshrined forever Form as the paramount content and Tomorrow as the Eternal Now.[15]

The heritage of post-Bolshevik Marxism has been to make its own cultural solutions problematic while simultaneously rendering the failure of revolution elsewhere in the Capitalist world a subject for cultural speculation. The tension in cultural analysis has been the need for a definition that will establish our certainties, and equally a recognition that their definition defies our realities.

As Marcuse showed in *Eros and Civilization* this definition of Us denies also the tactile, the sensitive, and the erotic. By institutionalizing the Protestant ethic as theology or by appropriating Fordism as mechanistic solidarity, Russia became the Other that we chose not to inhabit. It became the definition against ourselves. The cultural tension became the struggle for certain boundaries against the infinite possibilities of the sensitive. The boundaries were finally located in the present, in a territory with recognizable order; Israel did much the same thing for Judaism. The struggle for certainty ceased to be universal and became particularistic. The God that we lost in October 1917 was our sense of otherness as a possibility. Instead otherness

became a brute reality. We have wrestled with that other ever since. Religion ceased to be universalistic, as did Marxism, labelled by place and by the fact of its non-achievement of promise. The hopes of most European intellectuals were transferred, because of the social chaos of Western Europe, to the United States, where sensitivity, eroticism and common decency seemed to be kept alive. But at what price! Civilization (destroyed) was translated into culture — a subject for investigation and compartmentalization. Walter Benjamin's refusal to be trucked around North America as a symbol of a decaying civilization has some pathos but also some hope against the process. It was a hope the Europe would not be remade in the American image, or be allowed to degenerate into a Mausoleum of Dead Artifacts, but that it might remake itself out of the ashes of the old.

On these terms we should begin to rethink both the imperalism of the Old World and the hopes of the new. Generally within the past decade or two the Old World has shown itself to be more flexible in adapting external ideas as a redefinition of itself than the New World, which has tended to welcome externals as refugees in order to buttress its self-assurance has been. It is instructive, for example, to consider Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* in this light. The bulk of the book is devoted to the ways that Europeans over several centuries developed the myth of the "Orient" which suited and confirmed their own prejudices of who Arabs, Turks, Persians, Berbers, Kurds, etc. ought to be.

> Orientalism is premised on exteriority, that is on the fact
> that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient
> speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for
> and to the West . . . The exteriority of the representation is
> always governed by some version of the truism that if the
> Orient could represent itself it would: since it cannot, the
> representation does the job, for the West, and *faute de
> mieux*, for the poor Orient.[16]

This attitude has now been adopted by the United States, which has more investment in the Middle East than anywhere else, and which has the world's most expensively-financed universities devoted to Middle Eastern society and politics. Meanwhile in Europe a concern that Arabs or Iranians should be allowed to speak for themselves is becoming increasingly common and obviously more people are listening to them.

To a certain extent Western Europe may be a rare example where, at an intellectual level, an attempt is made because of the growing belief that culture is a living, ongoing history which requires the outsider as partner, not the

outsider as predator or instrument, at transcending its own history by seeing through its prior impositions. Such a full recognition can probably only come when a territory ceases to be the controller of the destinies of others. But we need not romanticize this process. It is in its infancy and may easily be overturned by other forces. A major intellectual example of its promises, however, is the degree to which the intellectual left, long entrapped by imperialism, is becoming fluidly intenational. In Britain this shift has been developed in part through the Western European Marxism of the *New Left Review* and *Screen* which have simultaneously lifted the British left out of its own parochialism and out of the possibility of being appropriated by the apparchiks of Moscow. Marxism has been released as an indigenous agency.[17] A further, and complimentary, thrust is the attempt, mainly through Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, to graft non-positivist French and Italian theories onto British cultural experience and theory in order to unravel the knot of the interconnection between structural processes and cultural practices. The distinction between social structure and culture becomes less a general categorization and more a process in the interpretation of the particular instances encountered.[19] Much of the Birmingham school's work is an elaboration of this simple two-way process, noticed by Marx in the Eighteenth Brumaire, explored in detail by E.P. Thompson in *The Making of the Working Class*,[20] but receiving its most extensive theoretical exploration by Antonio Gramsci and in the more recent writing of the late Nicholas Poulantzas. The impressive element in this work is that it is both extensively theoretical and, in the best tradition of social history, empirical. By being both it is, in the most important sense of the term, action sociology. It becomes a powerful corrective to the armchair theorizing of semiology and also to the directly institutional service sociology and political science of much positivist work.

And yet, there are important problems in appropriating the language of the Other in order to make sense of self. The British New Left often seems like Swinbourne or the Pre-Raphaelites of 100 years ago, imposing a definition from abroad on the rude hamfisted senses of the practical everyday. As E.P. Thompson makes clear in his response to Perry Anderson, the local tradition is alive and well, but we must allow it time to breathe before it is suffocated by the imperialism of external thoughts.[21] The local tradition was never parochial, but always cognisant of other people being in the same place, confronting similar problems. It could never tolerate the idea that the problems of the Other were more important than ours. The work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies is impressive because of the extent to which the appropriation of non-British theorists and conceptual frameworks are pitted against internal experiences and theorists. The exercise may not always be successful, but the attempt is surely important.

The Centre provides an important case-study in the dilemmas resultant from starting with a sense of "folk culture" and the routine understanding of personal and social experiences — mainly in the work of Richard Hoggart and E.P. Thompson — and then raising questions about the conceptual apparatus available to interpret and connect this experience to the wider society. Works such as *Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory* show the evident tension between making sense of social experiences in their own terms and the imposition of theoretical (largely Marxist) frameworks on those experiences. In a critical way this book and the work of the History Workshop [see Raphael Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory*] build on the Hoggart-Thompson tradition by developing studies of history and ethnography. As Samuel notes in his editorial preface, "The main thrust of people's history in recent years has been towards the recovery of subjective experience."[22] Against such impressive attempts at archival recovery must be set the other tendency in the Centre's work — to develop a sociology of subcultures in which every theory from Howard Becker to Althusser are ransacked in order to understand such groups as the Skinheads, Mods and Rockers, Communes and Punk. The development of an ethnography of contemporary culture is thus somewhat circumscribed by the theoretical occasions which called the investigations into existence. The tension between the historical work of the Centre and the contemporary is thus delicately maintained. But it also reflects a tension between making sense of marginality as significant towards understanding a central hegemony (as in, for example, the Centre's own study *On Ideology*[23]) and seeing marginality as itself central. For all its faults, *Resistance Through Rituals* is a major attempt to place teenage culture at the centre of the political, and social scene, precisely because "Hegemony . . . is not universal and given to the continuing rule of a particular class. It has to be *won*, worked for, reproduced, sustained,"[24] Youth culture is therefore not simply an appendage of hegemony but an engagement against it, which has to be understood in terms of a society in which "hegemony" had failed to make sense.

> . . . it is difficult to estimate firmly whether the more overt 'attack' on youth was of greater or lesser significance than the tendency, throughout the period as a whole, of the dominant culture to seek and find, in 'youth', the folk-devils to people its nightmare: the nightmare of a society which, in some fundamental way, had lost its sway and authority over its young, which had failed to win their hearts, minds and consent, a society teetering towards 'anarchy', secreting, at its heart, what Mr. Powell so eloquently described as an unseen and nameless

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"Enemy". The whole collapse of hegemonic domination to which this shift from the 1950's to the 1970's bears eloquent witness, was written — etched — in 'youthful' lines.[25]

This debate is not one unique to Britain's "subculture," but one which challenges all the received wisdoms of Marxist scholarship. What if the margin is the only centre of a cultural debate? The punks and the skinheads of Britain need not be invoked to understand that the frenzy of an Adorno against Jazz, the apoplexy of a Cambridge of the 1930's against D.H. Lawrence and F.R. Leavis, or the distrust that Lukacs had of Kafka and James Joyce are part of the same issue. Not only do the forms explode, they explode because of the reality of everyday experience. But they also explode because of a conflict between a sense of social ethics and aesthetic form. Everyday experience — in an hegemonic era be it a technological, capitalist or communist one is truncated by the form of expression. Yet ethics is revealed — and transcended — by a sense of the limitation of form.

The other tension in the work of the Birmingham Centre is that between the search for specifics and that for universals. In one sense the search for universals is always an imposition on our particularities. In another, we match ourselves against *their* universalistic impositions. *Our* particularities — Chekhov's Russia, Dylan Thomas's Wales or Baudelaire's Paris — become the universals of all of us rather than the universalistic impositions. Curiously — but perhaps not — the Birmingham Centre's teasing out of both dimensions reveals its strength. It is an analysis which attempts to expose *their* pecularities against *our* universals. Althusser's sense of what we (logically) are, Gramsci's sense of what we (ontologically) might be, and Richard Hoggart's sense of where we (empirically) start from, are surely important juxtapositions for any investigation of ourselves.

To return to the point made by Said's book, much of our cultural analysis to date has been imperialistic and thus at the expense of others. Most of it remains so, but signs here and there suggest that it need not continue. The search for universals in all knowledge has generally, in cultural analysis, succeeded only in being imperialistic — an imperialism of others, an imperialism by intellectual forms so that we cannot see the others and their experiences, or an imperialism of ethics which dictates what ought to be. All forms are political. Before we can talk sensibly about our societies, we have to free them of the cultural imperialism that inhibits their common vision.

III

But how can this be done in relation to the artifacts of culture, in relation to

cultural genre and in relation to specific human experiences so that they do not in their own way become further examples of "imperial" distortion?

What Said refers to as Orientalism and Imperialism has, of course, been given many terms with different nuances: ideology, hegemony, the signifier. In all cases these terms have been appropriated by those for whom they were made to fit to deny the liberating potential of the critiques that gave rise to them. Ideology was coined by Marx to describe a ruling culture; it was reversed by representatives of ruling cultures to refer to Marxism as an untruth. Such a history of terms need not deter us in employing them; "hegemony" is certainly doing the rounds at present. In looking at literary genres or new communicative forms we should recognize that no form is liberating or enslaving in its own internal logic, but that most have a capacity for changing our sensibilities, subject to the political context appropriating them. The task of a critical theory must first be the ability to apprehend in a technical and social way how a genre functions and contributes to changes in sensibility, while bearing in mind its capacity for change — growth, metamorphosis and decay. As Sontag writes in *On Photography*:

> Humankind lingers unregenerately in Plato's cave, still reveling, its age-old habit, in mere images of the truth. But being educated by older, more artisanal images. For one thing, there are a great many more images around, claiming our attention. The inventory started in 1839 and since then just about everything has been photographed, or so it seems. This very insatiability of the photographing eye changes the terms of confinement in the cave, our world. In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe. They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing. Finally, the most grandiose result of the photographic enterprise is to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads — as an anthology of images.[26]

But photography is not a self-propelling force and certainly not the self-contained metaphysical world painted by Sontag. If it acts on the world, the world equally acts on it. Photographs are made, cut, framed, printed, thrown away, hung in museums, put alongside news-items of war, used in advertising. Sontag's beautiful essay stresses the general change in our perceptions as a result of the existence of photography as a popular art; she does not address

herself to the particularity of its creation or its distribution, to its political use, nor, more significantly to its particularistic and comparative contexts. Is she really talking about photography everywhere, or just in the romantic Western eye? Can it be that Sontag is committing a new "Orientalism"? "When Cartier-Bresson goes to China, he shows that there are people in China and that they are Chinese."[27] And when Rolof Beny goes to Iran he shows there are people in Iran and they are Iranians? What Chinese? What Iranians? Do not the contexts of taking the photographs and displaying them matter at all?

One of the problems in Sontag's treatment is that of claiming that a genre is inherently liberating. Photography has certainly changed our perception of painting, of time, of spaces, of the written word, of speed. But so has television, or radio, or the phonograph, or the movie picture, or the microcomputer, or the duplicating machine. Books could (and have) been written about all of these forms and their liberating potential, their creativity, their uniqueness, their total revolutionary power. Such writing is often more significant than that emphasizing the instrumentality of any of these forms, their specific uses, and their advantage to business or politics. Such an emphasis crassly attempts to limit the uses of the technology to specific ends. But no one technology in itself has changed or will transform our complete range of sensibilities. The task is to be critically knowing and contextually aware, thus providing a sense of how a genre can aid us on the way to a fuller human sensibility.

The problem of dealing with one genre alone is seen further in much writing on literature, art or music, genres with us for considerably longer than photography. Three approaches in the present decade respond to the knowledge both that the genres have undergone some great "internal" change and to the existence of other competing genres. These are, briefly: (1) That the genre (or a subsection of it) should maintain some sort of essential purity — and considerable discussion from Lukacs to Cleanth Brooks deals with the essence of that purity. (2) That the crisis of the genre is almost without resolution; all possible forms, and perhaps contents, have been exhausted. We are all Dadaists now, or all we can do is to contemplate past literature, music or art as if they were totems of what mattered before the present decay set in. (3) That in response to the existence of other genres, the task of the critic is to display the universality of this particular one by elaborating its codes so that they stand up against the claims of newer forms. Presumably the task of the author, artist or composer is to verify the work of the critic by producing new works for analysis. This need may account for the fact that so many creations are so evidently scholastic.

Critical writing becomes sealed off from the everyday world, a sort of detective fiction of academia. Any attempts by writers such as Raymond Williams to bring it back into context with the idea of culture as experiential

growth are treated with scorn as being 'political', 'social' and 'unacademic' (which surely they are meant to be). Thus most writing on culture is a sign-hunt, a metaphysical distraction from making sense personally and politically. Trapped by its linguistic metaphors, culture becomes a prison-house from which we need escape. The task was never easy, but now the maze seems denser because the frames that bind us seem tighter. Religious distractions increase in part because of the treason of the intellectuals in reifying scholasticism and segmentation just when the road seemed to be opening again.

From the Bolshevik revolution to the present the cultural solution for socialist and conservatives alike was to simplify reality so that it could be explained in a comforting yet ultimately dismissive code. The voices that warn against such simplifications are themselves contradictory, but making sense of them rather than the simplifiers must be the task of critical theorists: Foucault on our re-thinking of the very basic institutions as processes that have shaped our knowledge, Sartre on the tension between individual and political freedom, Benjamin on the conflict between religious hope and secular despair, Gramsci on the structural conditions that seem to make liberation possible as against the cultural paraphenalia that makes it problematic.

Raymond Williams was surely right in his conclusion to *Politics and Letters:*

> I have been pulled all my life, for reasons we've discussed, between simplicity and complexity, and I can still feel the pull both ways. But every argument of experience and of history now makes my decision — and what I hope will be a general decision — clear. It is only in very complex ways that we can truly understand where we are. It is only in very complex ways, and by moving confidently towards very complex societies, that we can defeat imperialism and capitalism and begin that construction of many socialisms which will liberate and draw upon our real and now threatened energies.[28]

But we must be equally aware of the dangers of producing a new Marxist scholasticism which finally locks us into a conceptual Prison House of Culture.

IV

This article commenced with somewhat critical comments both on the

formalist intellectuals who saw culture as the self-contained interpretation of texts and on Lenin's equation of culture with party organization. And yet both were part of the same exploration. It was to the disadvantage of the Revolution that they could not feed each other. A reflexive theory, which was surely the intent of both the formalists and futurists, would have been enriched by a sense of social involvement which, in spite of Mayakovski, was not granted scope by a party viewing consolidation as more important than exploration. The containment of cultural analysis through linguistics may have subsequently enriched our vocabulary, and even our perception of practices, but it has done little to advance a sense of culture as committed political practice. We seem to know where we are, but are uncertain how to advance, or what alternative strategies we have available to cope with structures and processes that move on in spite of ourselves.

The reviews are definitions against which we have to formulate a language which will save us from an Orientalism of the occident. They demand a response. Unequivocally, they are connected with some of the universals that impose themselves on us. Our habitat is the media, the genre in which we choose to place ourselves or in which we are placed by their imposition. They are chosen (out of many others) because of their sense that alternatives are important. One (by Pamela McCallum on Raymond Williams) is about constructing theory out of experience: another by Robert Kett is on the important work of Pierre Bourdieu as a total re-definition of culture as praxis. The others are about situations and genre, and attempts at social transcendance from the forms while recognizing that the forms themselves give us clues to the boundaries that involve the sense of transcendance. The parameters impose the language of escape: the problematic of lived through reality forces us to confront our entrapment.

Some of these reviews are brief — time is short and analysis does not necessarily wait for lengthy expositions when the issue can be stated succinctly in a form which is ready-made, like a Sonnet, to be exploded. Others are longer; the meanderings of thought often require the flow of a stream to lead from one source to another.

Sometimes the form implodes. We need the implosion to recognize the relevance and limitations of the form. These reviews are dedicated to the principle that there is more to culture than the imposition of constraints. There are limitations to be overcome. The metaphors are useful only when we recognize that they are misguided and have to be conquered. A film is a film? We may misread it if we use linguistics alone. We may not read it at all if we don't encounter linguistic metaphors. The tension between social experience and theory is one that must be maintained; to retreat into one or the other forever traps us. These reviews demonstrate attempts to free us from that entrapment.

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The reviews are therefore part of an exploration that defines culture both as a lived-through experience and also as a coming to terms with imposed artifacts — whether they are theories of films, painting, music, institutions, or ideology. In some respects the reviews might be seen as a debate with structuralist-derived critiques in order to reformulate them. The question about structuralism and semiology is whether a formulation which Saussure saw as appropriate to stress the uniqueness of language may distort our understanding when transferred to some other aspect of human behaviour. Timpanaro is surely correct in observing

> that according to Saussure various other branches of knowledge will enter *in part and by approximation* into the future semiological science, but that only linguistics, accompanied at most by the study of writing and sign systems in the strict sense, has a full claim to belong to it ... He is very far from attempting a reduction of all reality to language, or to a system in a formlistic sense. Rather, he senses very strongly the non-conventionality (i.e. the lesser conventionality) of everything in life and human society which is not language."[29]

To see how theoretical analogy provides a substitute for not making theory becomes easy. Instead of establishing the grounds for theorizing about art or films or becoming a punk rocker we impose an embryonic theory about language to see whether it 'fits' the new phenomenon. An extreme way of justifying this approach is stated in postulating a theory of art by McHugh, Raffel, Foss and Blum:

> Art is what it is. Unlike science, art realizes the concrete by showing itself as itself — as its sufficient source and ground — without turning away to sources (things) that are external. Art is far from the things it can be seen as imitating because in producing itself art replaces what it imitates. Art's realness is grounded in its freedom from what it imitates because its very capacity to imitate, which is its productivity, constitutes it superiority.[30]

The problem with such an analysis — attractive though it is in allowing an automonous language for particular practices — is that it hinges on comparisons with other activities in order to show uniqueness, rather than in

seeing practice as part of an interconnecting dynamic. If the only real analysis of art is to do it, then the practice of the totality becomes impossible. Analysis is a collection of ideally typified but discrete practices that have no connections with each other either substantially or analytically. Structuralism and semiology, by imposing a connectedness, if only by analogical patterning, essentially seek for that connection. Analysis, in spite of its claim to providing autonomous theories imposes unity through form of discourse: "Other is that which organizes and grounds the idea of analytical interest . . . it is an affirmation which transcends sheer relativism because it is backed by a commitment that is external to the things we analyse, and external to those particular analyses. It is our form."[31] Commitment is directed towards understanding Other in its own terms. But it is also a commitment to Other (not others) as a point of discourse. Not surprisingly, therefore, the point at which *we* stand is never disclosed. We become Other. The methodology of analysis makes us mute against Other's certainty.

The reviews that follow are therefore torn between the need to go beyond structuralism's attempt at connectedness through the imposition of form and a phenomenological analysis which tries to derive form from practice itself. In an encounter with interpretations of certain genres, as well as interpretations of interrelated practices, the reviewers consider such questions as whether the semiology of film tells us anything about film and ourselves which we could not glean from direct observation, whether the structuralist interpretation of music is a hindrance or help to making sense of music's social presence, and whether literature in its own terms or literature in semiological terms are necessarily antagonistic concepts when considered as part of our wider cultural practice. Ultimately, social interpretations of culture are questions of the relationships between artifacts (documents, texts, music, sculpture and so on) and the contexts in which they are received and produced.

> The social process of culture takes place not within texts but between texts, and between texts and readers: not some ideal, disembodied reader, but historically concrete readers whose act of reading is conditioned, in part by the text it is true, but also by the whole ensemble of ideological relationships which bear upon the incessant production and reproduction of the texts.[32]

In a certain sense structuralism, semiology, hermeneutical analysis and a marxist critical theory ask the right questions but pose in a distorted context. "Who are the signifiers and whom do they signify?" is an important question, but so is "what happens when the signified signifies the signifier?" The attempt at specifying a series of cognitive ideal types, characteristic of analytic

thinking[33] would have some heuristic value if only we know what wider sociological — as opposed to metaphysical — problematic it was seeking to address. The difficulty in both cases reflects a failure to locate the search for meanings in relation to specific situations and institutions and is also a failure, in the last resort, to distinguish between meanings as meta-language and meaning as that which is produced by the active practice of subjects.[34]

The study of cultural practices over the past decade is in many respects therefore an examination of meaning, but also of perception and action. Much of the work has been conducted in discussion at a general theoretical level and much of that which is specific has based itself on the interpretation of documents, cultural artifacts, and cultural performances. The vantage points from which these investigations have been conducted range from attempts to explore particular genre (as indicated below in the reviews of the film criticism of Christian Metz and the literary criticism of Gerald Graf) to attempts to map out the interconnecting patterns of the culture of a whole society (the work of the Birmingham Centre and Pierre Bourdieu's Centre for European Society are the most comprehensive examples.) From whatever perspective, and with whatever theoretical equipment, cultural analysis has made serious inroads into the traditional preserves of other disciplines by exposing the hidden dimensions of practices and institution, and by calling into question concepts which, though subject to debate, have been integral parts of social theorizing for over a hundred years. Terms such as class, structure, ideology, stratification, function, polity, society, imitation, literature, language can never be used again without some sense of their abuse. But if the advent of cultural theorizing had achieved only *that* insight, it would have achieved only the rewriting of our dictionaries, thus locking us into the nostalgia of remembrance. The reviews that follow do more.

The following problems remain: Culture can be seen as a lived-through experience which we feel we have to interpret in order to understand *their* experiences against *ours* (what the sociologists would describe as inter-subjective experiences); culture can be codified as an independent, structured sense of *otherness*, in which we have no direct control part but containing parts which inform all of our everyday lives; or culture is the experience of coming to terms with either metaphysical or secular alternatives. None of these visions really work alone. Culture, as Harold Bloom or Walter Benjamin have argued is concerned with *mis*understanding the Other and deliberately *mis*reading "Them" into another reality. In other words, culture is related to creative fantasy. If the language of culture is based on an escape route from reality, the escape from *that* entrapment is into a reality which allows us to confront fantasy as part of the everyday. This point does not mean that we should treat novels, films, paintings, sculptures, graffitti, notes, folk songs or autobiographies as objects that have to be distanced through a structured theory, but rather that we should see them for what they are — and were

meant to be — aspects of ourselves, forms in which we rediscover our lives and personalities. Hell may well be the other, as Sartre said at the end of *Huis Clos*. It is also ourselves. Culture is probably the understanding of that what *they* made of us may be remade by *us* into our own subjective and transcendental sense of *them*. Our escape from that Prison-House is to recognize that we are the ones who have to transcend the structures. Pierre Bourdieu is surely correct. Our determination confronts the structure's determinism. If we understand the structure we might liberate ourselves. If we take the structure as the only term of reference we will forever be trapped.

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Notes

1. Sheila Fitzpatrick: *The Commissariat of Enlightenment*, Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky, Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 107.

2. These years are summarized well in the haunting woods of Roman Jacobson:
   We strained toward the future too impetuously and avidly to leave any past behind us. The links in the chain of time were broken. We lived too much in the future, thought about it, believed in it; the self-generating evils of the day did not exist for us. We lost a sense of the present. We were the witnesses and participants in the great socialist, scientific, and other such cataclysms ... Like the splendid hyperbole of the young Mayakovsky, 'the other foot was still running along a side street.' We knew that the thoughts of our fathers were already in discord with their surroundings. We read harsh the hire of the old, unventilated commonplaces. But our fathers still had remnants of faith in their convenience and social utility. To their children was left a single, naked hatred for the ever more threadbare, ever more alien castoffs of the vulgar reality ... "The Generation that Squandered its Poets," reprinted in Jacques Ehrmann: *Literature and Revolution*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1967, pp. 124-5.

3. Stalin, *Marxism and Linguistics*, New York: 1951 quoted in Frederic Jameson *The Prison House of Language*, Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 211.

4. Leon Trotski, *Literature and Revolution*, New York: Russell & Russell, 1957, p. 172.

5. Leon Trotski, *History of the Russian Revolution*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1934, p. 36.

6. Ernest Gellner, *The Legitimation of Belief*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1974, p. 203.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

8. Jameson, p. 216.

9. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, London: Paladin, 1973, p. 111.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

11. Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Historical Slang*, Harmondsworth; Penguin Books, 1972.

12. Tony Bennett in *Formalism and Marxism*, London: Methuen, 1979 tries to reclaim

Formalism by grafting in onto post-Althusserian Marxism as a Marxist science of culture. This important task is, however, restricted by a refusal to consider any hermeneutical or interpretative social theory.

In his book *On Materialism*, Sebastiano Timpanaro, London: Versa, 1976, has a plausible stab at structuralism but, ultimately, on the grounds that it is not sufficiently scientific. Again, he writes as if the work of the existentialists, phenomenologists and hermeneuticists were of no consequence. Indeed their work is consigned to the limbo of idealism. The model that Timpanaro seems closest to endorsing is that of the linguistic behaviourism of Bloomfield.

13. Gellner, p. 205-6.

14. A.J. Greimas, quoted in Jameson, *The Prison House of Language*, p. 216.

15. For an elaboration, see the present author's "Knowledge, Education and Power" in R. Brown (ed.), *Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change*, London: Tavistock Press, 1972.

16. Edward M. Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1979, pp. 20-21.

17. And this must be said in spite of E.P. Thompson's opinion to the contrary. His *Poverty of Theory*, London: Merlin Press, 1978 is obsessed with theory as limitation of others. On the contrary, Thompson as a Theorist seems to treat Historical Metaphor as Truth. See Perry Anderson, *Arguments within English Marxism*, London: Verso Editions, 1980.

18. Probably the major theoretical and empirical observation here is Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, eds., *Resistance through Rituals*, London: Hutchinson, 1976.

20. E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Gollancz, 1960.

21. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory*.

22. John Clarke, Charles Critcher and Richard Johnson, (eds.) *Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory*, London: Hutchinson, 1979; and Hall and Jefferson, *op cit*. See also my forthcoming study, "Structuralism and Critical Sociology in Britain" in John Fekete (ed) *The Structuralist Myth*. Raphael Samuel (ed.) *People's History and Socialist Theory*, London: Routledge, 1980, p. xviii.

23. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *On Ideology*, London: Hutchinson, 1978.

24. Hall and Jefferson (eds.), p. 40.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

26. Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, New York: Delta Books, 1973, p. 3.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

28. Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters*, London: New Left Books, 1979, p. 437.

29. Timpanaro, pp. 157-8.

30. Peter McHugh, Stanley Raffel, Daniel C. Foss, Alan Blum, *On the Beginnings of Social Enquiry*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974, pp. 160-161.

31. McHugh et al., p. 182.

32. Bennett, p. 174.

33. Further examples are found in *Maieutics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1980 which includes a discussion by A. Blum and P. McHugh, pp. 136-144 on Irony, Comedy, etc. as ideal types. What this does, in effect, is to treat them as personifications — "Irony enjoys itself" and so forth. The whole project, we are told, is directed at "raising the problem of whether and how we may collectively change ourselves." (p. 3). Not even Plato was quite so idealistic.

34. For an elaboration of this argument see Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, London: Hutchinson, 1976.

CULTURAL CRITICISM AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

Pamela McCallum

Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters,* London: New Left Books, 1979, pp. 444.

In recent years Terry Eagleton and Anthony Barnett have published critical assessments of Raymond Williams, terminating a protracted period in which the *oeuvre* of this major figure had not been the specific object of a systematic critique.[1] In *Politics and Letters,* a series of interviews conducted by three members of *New Left Review* (Barnett, Perry Anderson and Francis Mulhern), Williams replies to criticisms of his work, to questions both of method and substance occasioned by his theoretical development. Above all, Williams's critical engagement with the younger generation — those who, in Eagleton's words, "he has enabled to speak"[2] — focuses the pivotal questions of English cultural criticism.

Everywhere within the English tradition cultural theory has been dominated by the organic model, the notion inherited from Romantic and Victorian thinkers of the organism as a fundamental paradigm. The significance of the organism as prototype lies in its fusion of both the historical and the structural, the diachronic and the synchronic. In tracing the successive evolution of the organism (the diachronic) what is also disclosed is the co-temporal inter-relations of its constituent parts (the synchronic). Culture, conceived as an organism, became, in Williams's formulation, that 'whole way of life' which would foster and develop the growth of human capacities. Or, as the influential F.R. Leavis puts it, culture partakes of "the common flame in all things that live and grow."[3]

To be sure, the vocabulary which this organicist cultural criticism utilized — life, human, individuality, sincere and vital emotion — lays claim to concrete totality. In literary criticism, however, it is evident that such dominant categories achieve only a pseudo-concreteness. As Eagleton has noted, the methodology of cultural theory remained silenced and mute when confronted with contradiction: "all one could do was to point to which phenomena represented 'life', and which did not; there was by definition no possibility of real development within the case, self-limiting and self-referential as it was."[4] Among the criticisms of Williams's writings, none raises more urgent questions than the judgment Eagleton goes on to elaborate. Williams's early work, he argues, adopted a 'left-Leavisite' stance. Caught between the organicist aesthetics of *Culture and Society* and the corporatist sociology of *The Long Revolution,* his project was ironically deflected from

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its very purpose. Even if Williams had set out to reaffirm the capability of men and women to remake cultural values within their own lived experience, the English tradition left him bereft of a methodology through which to disentangle the seamless web advanced capitalist societies wove about the individual. Similarly, Eagleton contends, Williams's culturalist aesthetics favoured an "art which consolidates given meanings, rather than an art which ruptures and subverts them."[5] Thus, although Williams's work stood as a courageous affirmation of culture against society, it appeared tragically to lack the critical cutting edge necessary for qualitative transformation.

But if the stucturalist inspired critique of Williams has its decisive moment of truth, it must surely be to direct our attention to the synchronic texture of his work, to underline the ruptures, the rifts and elisions which are inscribed within his project. What informs the *Politics and Letters* interviews is the one-dimensionality of an interpretation seeing Williams's development merely as a movement from an early culturalist deviation to the more *engagé* political perspectives of *The Country and the City* or *Marxism and Literature*. Rather, the contrary is true. In reality, Williams's thought is revealed to be fractured by a series of contradictory sub-themes. While the elements of an idealist, organicist aesthetics are certainly inherent, the interviews begin to bring to the foreground a continuing awareness, present even at an early stage of his development, of the obstacles, distortions and blockages threatening the development of human capacities. In this context the interview format of *Politics and Letters* works remarkably well. Unlike interviews where the question functions simply as touchstone for an expansive, often only slightly related answer, the subjects of controversy put to Williams are detailed and concrete, at various points formulating and posing alternative positions. The interviewers both force and permit a specific intervention by Williams, resulting in genuine debate, exchange, self-criticism and dialogue.

The motif which pervades Williams's project is an endeavour to supersede the literary methodology of his training, to move beyond ways of seeing the past as static, codified tradition, and, to insist instead, on its constitutive pressures on the present. Commenting on the methodology of *Culture and Society*, he wrote, "from analysing and interpreting the ideas and values I moved to an attempt to reinterpret and extend them, in terms of a still changing society and of my own experience in it."[6] Paradoxically, however, the accent on the category of 'experience' tends to recall Leavis's subjectivist notion of 'life'. Not surprisingly, the *NLR* interviewers engage Williams about the hypostatization of this questionable construct. His reply divulges an essential undercurrent in his thinking. Refusing "to make a god out of an unexamined subjectivity," he insists on the impossibility of direct, unmediated contact with reality and the necessity of developing a critical vocabulary "for all that is not fully articulated, all that comes through as disturbance, tension,

blockage and emotional trouble."[7] Although the focus on culture as a whole way of life, on the creation of cultural values in ordinary, unexamined lives has been brought to the fore in *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution,* an equally emergent theme is the awareness of the imperative to unravel the complex density of the structural ensemble that inhibits, distorts or fractures such a process. In addition, it should be noted that Williams's defence of the "ordinariness" of culture was directed, in part, against an elitism which saw cultural tradition as the privileged enclave of high art and dismissed the lives of working people an manipulated, uncreative, passive and insignificant.

Moreover, behind this feature of his thought lies a crucial theoretical project, the effort within the English tradition to specify what Sartre has designated *le vécu*. The critical construct Williams developed — one which appeared from *The Long Revolution* to the recent *Marxism and Literature* — is "structure of feeling." The notion originates in his intention to express the common themes among a generation of dramatists or writers, to give definition to their singular way of seeing and inscribing within their work unique pressures, problems, disturbances. The term was to be both more concretely specific and less expansive than the abstract universalism of *zeitgeist*. It gave form to an experience as pressuring, determining and inescapable as "structure," yet often semi-articulated, perceived only as experience, as "feeling." In *Marxism and Literature* Williams maintains "we are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-related continuity."[8] The difficulty of the speaking voice underscores both the textured density of the notion and the mediated area of experience it is designed to articulate. He goes on to describe the typical emancipatory wedge a structure of feeling may embody. Put simply, it occurs in the field of tension and rift between residual or dominant ideology and emergent or critical experience.

Here the complexity of the interviews makes it possible to analyze Williams's own theoretical development in terms of a structure of feeling. The third chapter contains Williams's first extended commentary on his creative writing, especially his four novels — *Border Country, Second Generation, The Fight for Manod* and *The Volunteers* — published between 1960 and 1978. The dates are deceptive. He began the first of seven drafts of *Border Country* in 1947 and put the other novels through equally extensive revisions. The writing of fiction has been a sustained activity throughout his adult life. Furthermore, the novels embody a structure of feeling often submerged or displaced in his other writings. While the analytical works may incorporate culturalist or idealist notions, the novels emphasize the brutalization and distortion of human capacities, the actual difficulties of living out authentic values in

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advanced capitalist societies. Since the novels involve Welsh working-class characters, often making the transition to academic lives, most critics tend to view them merely as autobiographical glosses to his other writings. Doubtless such an inter-relationship is always structurally implicit in them. Yet if the novels testify to culture as "a whole way of life," it is a culture of truncation and fragmentation, of the alienation of human projects and the displacement of human lives. Matthew Price, the sociologist of *Border Country,* Peter Owen, the young research student of *Second Generation,* and Lewis Redfern, the journalist of *The Volunteers* — all professional workers with words — are forced to retreat into mute silences in the face of the opaque entanglements they seek to unravel. Any eventual victory is paid for in their own lives and the lives of their families. Williams speaks of one novel representing "a specific contemporary sadness: the relation between a wholly possible future and the contradictions of the present."[9]

Such a vision — at once emancipatory in its insistence on possible transformation and tragic in its recognition of the brutal devastation in advanced capitalist societies — underlies his later works. In particular, *Modern Tragedy* seeks to widen the notion of tragedy from its definition as literary category to encompass the twisted texture of the twentieth century. The tragedy of genuine lived experience and history is given form in the blockage of any potentially radical transformations. Yet Williams refuses to ground his analysis in resignation and passivity. Brecht's drama, he argues here, is at its most innovative in the interplay of an indicative mode, the presentation of reality as it exists, and a subjunctive mode, the representation of what might have been:

> "a dramatic form . . . may have to represent a social situation in which at one level or another all roads have been blocked; or even if certain limits are being pushed back, they will still by definition subsist so long as this class society remains. It is at this point that the notion of a subjunctive mode needs to be introduced."[10]

The subjunctive, according to Williams, refuses the millenarianism of the utopian, replaying instead what might have been, inscribing the possible within the web of what is.

This acknowledgment that the potential for qualitative change can break into consciousness even within the perceptual entanglement and confused boundaries of lived experience is one of the most important underpinnings of Williams's distinctive critical practice. It represents a significant advance from the culturalist idealism and organicism which forms the dominant thematic of

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an early work such as *Culture and Society*. Especially striking is the parallel Williams now draws between some of his own concepts and Sartre's theory of scarcity.[11]

Because Williams has so consistently emphasized, focused and deepened his concept of lived experience, there is an unsettling irony in his persistent unwillingness to engage fully Freudian theory. The ideological effect of such an approach is to deny psychoanalysis the status of science, to consider its texts as simply mediated experience: "Freud's writings should be read, not so much as a body of science, as what are called novels."[12] His concern to locate Freud's texts within the sphere of literature is an effort to undermine their acceptance as theory. Certainly, his polemic is partially motivated by a reductive Freudian criticism which views literary texts merely as the sublimation of impulses. Even so, it is precisely in the status of Freud's theoretical insights that cultural critics are able to gauge the depth and intensity of the deformation of human capacities. From this critical map of psychic distortion ("the history of man is the history of his repression"[13]) Marcuse reinvents a liberating vision in *Eros and Civilization*. Williams disavows such a crucial mediation, retreating away from an engagement with Freudian theory.

Still, what characterizes *Politics and Letters* is an on-going willingness to engage debate, to take up awkward conceptual dilemmas again and again. The book takes its title from a short-lived journal co-edited by Williams for a brief period after the war. The retrieval is not to be overlooked: even if *Politics and Letters* managed only four issues, its impulse has stubbornly survived, extended and developed in Williams's own critical projects.

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Notes

1. Terry Eagleton, "Criticism and Politics: The Work of Raymond Williams," *New Left Review*, 95 (1976), 3-23, and Anthony Barnett, "Raymond Williams and Marxism," *New Left Review*, 99 (1976), 47-64. For a survey of Williams's writings see Michael Green, "Raymond Williams and Cultural Studies," *Cultural Studies*, 6 (1975), 31-48.

2. Eagleton, p.9

3. F.R. Leavis, *D.H. Lawrence*, Cambridge: Minority Press, 1930, p. 6.

4. Eagleton, p. 7.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

6. In *The Long Revolution*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1961, p. ix.

7. *Politics and Letters*, p. 168.

8. *Marxism and Literature,* London: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 132.

9. *Politics and Letters,* p. 294.

10. *Ibid.,* p. 218.

11. *Ibid.,* p. 261.

12. *Ibid.,* p. 332.

13. *Eros and Civilization,* New York: Vintage, 1955, p. 11.

A MUSICIAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Jody Berland

Whose Music? A Sociology of Musical Languages, Graham Vulliamy, Trevor Wishart, John Shepherd, Phil Virden. Foreword by Howard Becker. London: Latimer Press, 1977; Washington: Harvester Press, 1980. pp. 296.

The introduction to this book, and the tone throughout, inform the reader that this is a ground-breaking study meant to stimulate "re-examination of traditional assumptions about music." It does so although it helps if the reader is unfamiliar with the development of sociological music theory since Weber, and if, further, one is relatively unhampered by details of music history or comparative musicology, and has no philosophical predispositions towards a theory of culture which can account for the effectivity of artistic production in terms empirically sound and analytically dialectical.

The book is composed of a series of essays by the various authors singly or in collaboration. Shepherd's work is the most theoretically ambitious and comprises the first half of the book, with some assistance from Wishart, a British composer. Regarding this section it is misleading to talk about musical "languages," since the subject is western European art music of the classical period, and the approach lacks a comparative study of other musical languages. This limitation creates problems in interpretation apparent to any ethnomusicologist and to which I will return. The remaining essays discuss musical social stratification, mass culture, the sociology of musical education, and "radical culture". Finally the authors provide a glossary of musical terms, offering a clarity in technical musical matters not attained by the "terms" of reference in social theory which they have chosen to employ.

The book begins by attacking current musicological theory for its failure to place musical meaning in a sociological context. The criticism is just, and the argument for a sociological orientation in the study of "meaning" in music is convincing. But the absence of clear reference to any existing writing on the sociology of musical form[1] offers an early indication of the theoretical limitations of the work, the authors of which appear far more pioneering in their analysis than is in fact the case. Shepherd argues that western classical music reflects, in its harmonic structure, the social structure of capitalist industrialist society, and the major focus of his work is towards a defense of this argument. Shepherd's critique of the attempts of musicologists to explain musical "meaning" places them epistemologically in the context of social and philosophical developments in "advanced industrial civilization." He argues that until their assumptions are revealed and criticized, musicology will be

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unable to provide a cogent analysis of the "meaning" of music. The musicologists he discusses[2] disregard music's role as a social symbol in a specific historic context, and thus mystify the meaning of music by reinforcing the split between form and content, thought and feeling, material and idea, art and society. To challenge this dualistic epistemology "ultimately brings under scrutiny the entire centralized social-intellectual structure of industrial society". Shepherd insists that "Music has meaning only insomuch as the inner-outer, mental-physical dichotomy of verbally referential meaning is transcended by the immanence 'in' music of what we may conceive of as an *abstracted* social structure . . ." Thus the familiar discomfort of trying to "represent" music verbally is here both reinforced and apparently solved by the "objectivity" of structural analogy. The "immanent" meaning is discovered by recognizing that "music is . . . an open mode that, through its essentially structural nature, is singularly suited to reveal the dynamic structuring of social life, a structuring of which the 'material' forms only one aspect." Thus culture and society are "immanent 'in' the potentially creative articulation of specific symbols." We are not told what makes the articulation of symbols "creative" in this context. This discussion of contemporary musicology grants legitimacy to its analysis only to the extent that it acknowledges "*structural* conformity between music and mind." (Shepherd's emphasis)

Shepherd is disappointed also with music sociology for discussing its situation but not its form. Weber and Adorno receive passing mention, but their theoretical positions are not dealt with substantively. Adorno is criticized for aesthetic elitism, while his contribution to political cultural theory or to historical analysis of musical language is passed over. Weber's theme of rationalization is visible in the approach of the authors, but his work is not discussed. Other music critics and historians make no appearance, presumably because their analytic assumptions are not based on a sufficiently broad theoretical model. But these rejections are premature, and Shepherd's response to the epistemological challenge is more heroic than progressive. His ideas derive from new mentors: McLuhan, Ong and other structural anthropologists (though the approach lacks an ethnomusicological dimension), and Basil Bernstein, who at least seems willing to consider the interaction between society, media, and consciousness as the source for a theoretical analysis.

Shepherd proposes that the epistemological barrier separating musicologists from consciousness of social meaning also prevents modern society from self-consciousness. This division demands a critical and reflective self-consciousness for the critic wanting to analyze cultural forms within his own society. Shepherd's strategy, however, is to revert to a time-machine jaunt to "pre-literate" society as a source for comparative analysis. Both "pre-literate"

and "industrial" societies are described in the abstract, as total and holistic entities. Shepherd describes the experience before the development of literacy and ensuing technology, centralization, and division of labour. Here he discovers the fatal "oral-visual" split contaminating modern consciousness. If we are to believe Shepherd [and Wishart], the phonetic alphabet and the subsequent spread of literacy through the movable type press have been chiefly responsible for an enormous and mainly unfortunate transformation of thought and experience since the pre-literate age. Writing has irrevocably severed thought from experience, under the guidance of the ruling classes; as a fundamentally destructive force, it is held responsible for modern technology, Newtonian physics, idealist philosophy (commencing with Plato), material-ism, alienation, elitism, the hegemony of the centre, nationalism and the power of the modern state, class stratification, aesthetic dualism, the monopolization of the music industry, and the harmonic evolution of European music since the middle ages.

Like McLuhan, Shepherd introduces an impressive number of considerations into his analysis. The patently linear and simplistic historic scheme, in other words, disguises itself through its enthusiastic multiplicity of factors. This approach to social communication arrives at an almost unqualified condemnation of post-feudal society and names literacy as the driving force behind its catastrophic development. Given the political orientation of the current literacy debate in Britain and elsewhere, this position is most peculiar. Following McLuhan, it projects a frenetic paranoia against print the only comfort of which lies in the "revolutionary" technology of television, an absurdly de-historicized optimism as mythological as the rejected musical epistemology. While Shepherd does dutifully assert the potentially dialectical quality of literacy in the growth of consciousness, the dialectic is lost in the analysis of music history. Clearly, he believes, with Marx, that the ideology of the ruling class is the ruling ideology; unlike Marx he fails to indicate any dynamic activity which might challenge this hegemony.

With the aid of structural diagrams (they look rather like the "building blocks" of chemistry texts), Shepherd traces the development of pentatonic music in medieval society and charts its erosion by tonality as the feudal system gave way to modern industrialism. He argues that pentatonicism, the harmonic form of medieval plainchant and polyphony, encodes an "unequal" but not "hierarchical" relation between tones, since there is no central or dominating note.[3] Any note in the pentatonic scale can function as a "fundamental", reflecting the uncentralized and unalienated social relations of feudal society. The three-dimensional extension into bourgeois tonality is the result of a new consciousness created by literacy whereby explicit tonal relations signify a spatialized, unified world-sense characterized by homogeneity and centralization. The "magnetic pull" of tonality towards the

dominant key expresses a quintessential belief in progress as part of industrial man's "increased control of the environment" which leads him to "conceive of manipulating and 'improving' the environment." Shepherd's doubt that any "improvement" has occurred is made clear by his compression of time-consciousness, centralization and hierarchy, nationalism, explicit codes and conceptual distance from experience, and alienation into one "ideology" of "industrial man".

Musicologists might doubt that tonal centres are unique to European music.[4] Further, they would challenge Shepherd methodologically for his preoccupation with harmonic structure. As Dalhaus argues the concentration on harmonic phenomena "as opposed to differentiated presentations of thematic and motific relationships almost always serve the verification or refutation of a theory and not the interpretation of a work . . .". Thus "analysts are conscious of not being able to determine sufficiently the functional connection of harmony with the other dimensions or components of form."[5] This concentration on harmony limits social correlation to a laboratory proof rather than a history of western music. Such a history requires more complex *musical* analysis — whether of the relationship of harmonic modulation to the dominant key signature, or of other features such as the derivation of melody or rhythm from folk music or other cultures, or various psychological attitudes towards the "spirit of progress", or the apparent relationship of the composer to the dominating musical ideology of his own time.[6] Such a history must consider changes in melody, motif, rhythm, mood, texture, and in the *social function* of the music. Perhaps Shepherd would argue that his focus on the harmonic structure stems from the imperative of connecting musical form with social structure. But an overly schematized view of musical evolution cannot guarantee an adequate social or historical analysis, and is more likely to impede it. Such obstruction is certainly the case here, where structural determinism prevents the consideration of a multitude of musical qualities expressing precisely those individual and social tensions, ruptures or negations, dreams, questions, enchantments and disenchantments, isolations and solidarities, criticisms and transformations, that Shepherd's history forgets.[7]

While Shepherd shows clearly that bourgeois music did not evolve through autonomous internal development as an art form, he fails to describe any expression in music of the often contradictory relationship of artists and their work with dominant ideology. Harmonic enrichment is not understood here as part of the early bourgeois critique of feudal authority, or as the musical expression of a new and progressive ideology of freedom propelling music towards new form and new functions.[8] Rather tonality is depicted as fated *individualism* in the web of authoritarian industrialism, leading to the abstract alienation of atonalism and the serial technique. Not only are the

achievements and ideologies of the bourgeois revolution frozen into schematic diagrams, but in this chapter, entitled "The Musical Coding of Ideologies", the concept of ideology itself is named and dismissed in the same moment. Who could maintain that Mahler is the same bourgeois as Verdi or Bartok, or that Beethoven's "ideology" is the same as Wagner's? What is presented is not ideology but structure. Nor is it music. Nor are there composers. We can discover no developing contradictions between art and the civilization he describes, surely one of the major features of modern western culture. Musical creation loses, along with its autonomy, any constitutive role in the development of consciousness, a role it would (and does) require more than *structure* to fulfill. By engaging the language of harmonic tonality, all music becomes affirmative of dominant culture. In Shepherd's analysis art becomes a victim, or even an accomplice, in this "civilizing process" which is painted in the darkest colours, and about which he offers only momentary remarks of consolation. Since western music is undeniably "coded" in tonality, his analytic method precludes the discovery of creative contradiction. As with the satanic achievements of Mann's fictionalized Schoenberg, "there is not a free note."[9] Technological rationalization becomes the implacable face of the universe. In his impressive historic panorama, nothing *happens*.

A new determinism, wherein "encode" replaces "reflect" as the unclear signifier of causality is involved. The concept of human agency is blurred by the assumption that experience is unconscious, and that its categories cannot be creatively transformed. This assumption creates some embarrassing problems for the second, more "concrete" section of the book, as the authors turn their attention to the critical mistreatment of popular culture. In an essay on social stratification in twentieth century music, Virden and Wishart demonstrate their uneasiness in introducing their own analytic assumptions.

> We do not deny that tonality remains the dominant musical language within the "European" tradition. As with any cultural field there will be a tendency for the dominant "language" to invade others that might try to coexist. So, in music, we should expect that the conventions of the forms favoured by the ruling.elements would exert a great deal of influence upon the music of the general population. We should equally expect almost a complete lack of "pollution" of elite music by any music generated by the peoples . . . What we might expect, however, assuming that the great differences in musical preferences and productions between the classes are not differences between good and bad musics, is that there are

> different rules for generating (both good and bad) music
> for the ruling and working classes because what the
> musics have to say is quite different.

In response to the bewildering issue of the musical "discourse" of social classes in contemporary society, we turn aside from how we "should expect" social hegemony to assert itself in music — *not* to contest the assumptions either theoretically or historically, but to prefer a democratic aesthetics of co-existence. Their "separate but equal" model for music evaluation attacks some prejudices in socially conditioned aesthetic values, and proves something can be "going on" in popular culture, but the question of what that something is remains abstract as long as it is separated from the social and individual processes which materialize the form, or which the "form" in turn activates. To defend popular music from the orthodoxy of Adorno and traditional music scholarship, they approach music as "stratification of symbols" in relation to a "continuum, the poles of which embody at one extreme high mediation, explicitness and lineal structure and at the other more immediacy, implicitness and circularity." The authors' application of Bernstein's linguistic model to a study of blues pentatonicism is stimulating (but what about its inevitable return to the dominant key signature?) and avoids much of his implicit value orientation, but it also avoids problems of understanding "symbols" in relation to cultural tensions. Hence the role of constitutive creative production in relation to social conflict is unresolved. Though the authors recognize the need to analyze active contradictions within contemporary popular culture, their analytic resources are not adequate to their intentions. How Afro-American music articulates a developing consciousness as it changes from its "intentional" pentatonic origins remains unclear. The dilemma finds its most poignant expression in the quotation concluding Wishart's eclectic concluding essay "On Radical Culture": in response to a query about "post-Capitalist" society's power to integrate subversive innovation, a British film-maker responds that the problem is not one artists can solve and that the working class should never trust left wing intellectuals.

In its focus on immanent structure, the analysis adds little to Adorno's work on the structure of musical language;[10] and calls into question the author's ostensible dislike of his work. Their own scheme is too linear to provide further insights where they are really needed, especially into such matters as the analysis of musical form as language active within the complex and dynamic relations of musical material, compositional procedure, listener reception, and the musical and social context mediated through the foregoing. The work shows evidence of some discomfort with critical social theory, writing about music, writing in general. It evokes as much uneasiness as it

displays, although perhaps of a different sort. The authors offer little evidence of pleasure in music, little discussion of the experience of listening or of how musical experience varies with style, intention, or context. Shepherd especially seems to understand both musical creation and listening as unconscious experience determined by structural form, which is itself unconsciously determined. As a result there is an underlying pessimism about critical creativity, and about music's ability to affect either subjective or social change. This perspective seems, on the surface at least, paradoxical for a book attacking "bourgeois" epistemology and the impact of social inequality on musical experience. The paradox is attributable to the theoretical impetus of the work as a whole, which becomes problematic as soon as the authors begin to construct their own historical "model"; their approach ultimately challenges the very intentions which make their contribution to the sociology of music important.

The authors would agree that any concrete work in cultural studies must "make a strategic theoretical choice as to which definitions are most effective," such choices are "bound to have theoretical consequences."[11] Without examining the role of creative activity in social and artistic production, the authors cannot explain either the dialectics of music history nor the social or theoretical implications of their own activity. Musicology may benefit from their demand that the study of music must consider the social forces within which music functions, and which it articulates; but the critic must also demand a more comprehensive understanding of how music itself as a mode of cultural creation participates in the changing consciousness and experience of living human beings and of social classes. The consistent intention in *Whose Music?* is to counteract the idealist view of music as an autonomous expressive realm, to show that it is shaped by social forces — the McLuhanesque version of these social forces is part of their problem. While the authors succeed in showing where music is determined, they do not succeed in showing where it is *not*. Shepherd's determinism may be an advance from the biological determinism of his mentors among the anthropologists, or even from the schematic determinism of orthodox Marxism, but it is not yet great progress. His desire to attack the dualistic contradictions of western thought by presenting it with its own history breaks down, not because he avoids history, but because, under the fire of the attack, the historical concept is appropriated by technological thought.

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CULTURAL THEORY

Notes

1. Extensive recent bibliographies are available in K. Peter Etzkorn, editor, *Music and Society: The Later Writings of Paul Honigsheim*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973; and in the *International Review of Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol. VII No. 2, 1976; Vol. VIII No. 1, 1977; and Vol. VIII No. 2, 1977.

2. Suzanne Langer and Leonard Meyer.

3. To clarify this "technical" confusion about musical syntax, it should be pointed out that in pre-tonal music it is *precisely* a central note which provides "consonant" resolution, ie. defines other notes in a melody as "dissonant" in relation to itself. In tonal music the "hierarchy" involves not single notes, however, but triads, which define other chords as "dissonant", i.e., requiring resolution. Thus the entire classical "system" is structured on a complex pattern of thematic and harmonic language which "makes expression for the first time an element of the total structure." For this reason "Tonality is more than a harmonic system (although it is sometimes convenient to speak as if it were only that). It carries with it a complex set of presuppositions about melody, rhythm, and form, none of which can exist independently of the others." Charles Rosen, *Arnold Schoenberg*, New York: Viking Press, 1975, pp. 27-28. The critical "discovery" of the hierarchical functioning of harmonic modulation as the basis of the classical form is attributable to the whole history of 19th and 20th century composition, whose progressive loosening of the "hierarchy" of musical language, i.e., of the stability of the syntax of structure, received its radical culmination with the work of Schoenberg some seventy years before the publication of this book.

4. This objection was in fact raised, in response to a paper by Shepherd, by members of the Society for Ethnomusicology during a panel at the 1980 SEM conference.

5. Carl Dahlhaus, "Some Models of Unity in Musical Form", *Journal of Music Theory*, 19 (1), Spring 1975, p. 7.

6. For a relevant discussion of "visual ideology" in painting as simultaneously socially determined, autonomous, and internally constitutive and changing, see Nicos Hadjinicolaou, *Art History and Class Struggle*, London 1978.

7. For instance "Polyphony, tonal harmony, the predominance of instrumental over vocal music, the prevalence of the dance rhythms now taken for metrical norms, the ascendance of major and minor, in short all of the fundamental structural and also socially functional characteristics of recent western music, are historically the outcome of periodic breakthroughs and consolidations resulting from just this continual infiltration over the centuries of secular traditions into the preserves of high art, and the reverse influence as well, in violation of all the precepts of the church theorists and against the sometimes deadly resistance of the authorities." Norman Cazden, "A Simplified Mode Classification for Traditional Anglo-American Song Tunes", 1971 *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, p. 55.

8. "The great musical struggles under feudalism started under the banner of the 'struggle for true music', reflecting the fierce struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudalism. At the beginning of this struggle the bourgeoisie is in direct opposition to the church and thus also to the feudal function of music. The feudal function of music made possible the social purpose of evoking and intensifying in the congregation a state of repentance, but the new function in bourgeois society is that of allowing a harmonious development of the individual personality and is directly opposed to the feudal function." Hanns Eisler, *A Rebel in Music*, 1978, p. 44.

9. Thomas Mann, *Dr. Faustus: The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkuhn as Told by a Friend*, 1948.

10. See Theodor Adorno, *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, New York: Seabury Press, 1973; *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, New York: Seabury Press, 1976, and other writings; also W. V. Blomster, "Sociology of Music: Adorno and Beyond", *Telos* Number 28, Summer 1976.

11. Stuart Hall, "Some Paradigms in Cultural Studies", Estratto da Annali-Anglistica (1978, 3), Instituto Orientale di Napoli.

CULTURAL STUDIES AND COMMON SENSE

Alan O'Connor

Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style,* London and New York: Methuen, 1979, and John Clarke, Chas Critcher, Richard Johnson, *Working-Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory,* London: Hutchinson, 1979.

I

Two recent publications from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, at the University of Birmingham, provide further evidence of the "linguistic turn" in social and cultural studies. An important part of this phenomenon is the reformulation of methodological principles in terms of members' communicative competences. In North America, for example, "contextual" folklore studies make a strong case for granting the everyday expressions of social groups their own intelligibility.[1] In terms of a different tradition, if Frazer's *Golden Bough* pours scorn on certain rites of dawn, Wittgenstein, in an obscure text that has recently been reprinted, observes that "towards morning, when the sun is about to rise, people celebrate rites of the coming of the day, but not at night, for then they simply burn lamps."[2] Long after Frazer's *Golden Bough,* intellectual writers have been notoriously overconfident that they have understood the meaning and foolishness of the artistic communication and everyday rituals of different social groups.

Cultural studies inherits, in the works of Raymond Williams, many thoughtful passages on exactly this problem. The speaking voice and the dancing body that the student of contemporary culture encounters are, Williams insists, *already* interpreted as part of an ordinary conversation or the everyday organization of the dance. In a passage of *The Long Revolution* he writes: "the emphasis that matters is that there are, essentially, no 'ordinary' activities, if by 'ordinary' we mean the absence of creative interpretation and effort."[3] The published papers of cultural studies are the result of an encounter between its own organized discourse and the everyday understandings of native actions and experiences.

The theme of the authenticity of everyday experience is part and parcel of the work of E.P. Thompson, who has also had a major influence on cultural studies:

> I would have to say that the historian has got to be
> listening all the time. He should not set up a book or a

> research project with a totally clear sense of exactly what
> he is going to be able to do. The material itself has got to
> speak through him. And I think that this happens.[4]

A major emphasis in Thompson's recent essay on "The Poverty of Theory" is the long tradition of historical activities and the accumulated skills within the discipline for "listening" to the historian's sources.[5]

The emphasis on experience assumes what Williams calls a "knowable community,"[6] in part a historical phenomenon and in part a literary convention:

> We have only to read a George Eliot novel to see the
> difficulty of the coexistence, within one form, of an
> analytically conscious observer of conduct with a
> developed analytic vocabulary, and of people represented
> as living and speaking in customary ways . . . There is a
> new kind of break in the texture of the novel, an evident
> failure of continuity between the necessary language of
> the novelist and the recorded language of many of the
> characters.[7]

The asymmetry between the language of the observer and the oral traditions he or she inscribes is not confined to the novel. A similar distance is found in nineteenth-century social and statistical investigation. Williams contrasts the different methods of Mayhew's and Charles Booth's studies of the London poor:

> Mayhew is often now preferred, and he is indeed more
> readable and more accessible. His studies were based on
> direct contacts with people, telling their own stories in
> their own words, and though he set out to cover the whole
> range systematically, and often checked his findings with
> those he was writing about, his mode of vision belonged
> to an earlier world, before the scale of the problem and
> the sustained consideration of systematic remedies had
> altered social vision.[8]

There is no such mode of vision in Booth's work. His method of impersonal and systematic tabulation does not assume a "knowable community." He treats the poor as objects of study, but as Williams points out, statistical and

analytic methods may be necessary in order to fully understand the complexities of a capitalist social formation, such as that of London at the turn of the century.

One of the arguments for the *New Left Review's* systematic introduction of European "marxisms" and other bodies of thinking, was that British marxism in the 1960's lacked the necessary "concepts and categories with which to analyze its own society."[9] The extent to which British marxism has come to recognize itself by the use of certain concepts and categories (mode of production, surplus value, ideological, political and economic "instances") challenges the cultural studies tradition of valuing lived experience. The present dilemma of cultural studies is to find methods which do not simply assume a "knowable community," but which also recognize that such shared experience ought not be carelessly appropriated.

There is an ambiguity, for example, in the recent approach of cultural studies to youth subcultures. The boundaries of *Resistance Through Rituals* are set by drawing upon marxist theoretical work that conceptualizes class and ideology in an extremely sophisticated way. This theoretical work distinguishes the approach of cultural studies to youth subcultures, from that of the sociology of leisure, or writings on the seemingly universal problems of youth. Yet there are enormous practical and social differences between this theoretical work and the everyday discourse of those whom it singles out as constituting a field for study.

This dichotomy remains largely unconfronted and it is not surprising that more recent publications by members of the Birmingham Centre go in such different directions. Hebdige's book on subcultural style opts for a highly worked semiological presentation of punk style. On the other hand, the studies in working class history and theory edited by Clarke, Critcher and Johnson are informed by a theoretical orientation which makes it possible to begin to think through the relation between their textual work, and the spoken and written style of those about whom they write.

II

Dick Hebdige's book, *Subculture: the Meaning of Style*, is a product of the encounter between present-day cultural studies and youth subcultures, especially punk in Britain. It celebrates the expressive moment of punk before it was reduced to a fashion in music and clothes, or to "deviance" and good fun. Following Barthes in *Writing Degree Zero*, Hebdige interprets that moment as a zero degree of subcultural style, analogous to the white writing of the *nouveau roman* in France. In other words, punk is not simply another style of youth subculture, but for one intoxicating moment challenges the apparent naturalness and boundaries of any style: racial, sexual or historical. The argument is made by contrasting punk with other subcultural

styles, those of the teddy boys, mods, rockers, and skinheads. The skinheads, for example, had a positive style in that they attempted to recreate in the "mob" an idealized version of traditional working class community.[10] The rolled shirt sleeves, working boots emphasized by jeans that were not quite long enough, and the overt masculine sexism, contributed to the skinheads' remembrance of a community that no longer exists as it used to be.

A major theme of Hebdige's book is the mediated response of youth subcultures to the growing black presence in Britain:

> The proximity of the two positions — working class youth and negro — invites identification and even when this identity is repressed or openly resisted, black cultural forms (e.g. music) continue to exercise a major determining influence over the development of each subcultural style (p. 73).

Black Jamaican music, reggae, and Rastafarianism in Britain affected the emergence of punk. The whites were soon left by the wayside, however, as the black patois became more strident and the religious themes of the Rasta movement became clearer.

Another important strand in Hebdige's book is the relation between punk style and the tenor of the respectable media in Britain:

> The punks appropriated the rhetoric of crisis which had filled the airwaves and the editorials throughout the period and translated it into tangible (and visible) terms. In the gloomy, apocalyptic ambience of the late 1970's — with massive unemployment, with the ominous violence of the Notting Hill Carnival, Grunwick, Lewisham and Ladywood — it was fitting that the punks should present themselves as 'degenerates'; as signs of the highly publicized decay which perfectly represented the atrophied condition of Great Britain (p. 87).

Punk ensembles subverted the media's language of crisis.

Clearly Hebdige's use of the zero degree of style theme is grounded in history and actual social practices to a greater extent than Barthes's work on writing style. In *Writing Degree Zero* the argument extends from pre-Classical literature to Camus and beyond, without ever explicitly dealing with any one style in the detail promised by the opening lines:

> Hebert, the revolutionary, never began a number of his
> news sheet *Le Pere Duchene* without introducing a
> sprinkling of obscenities. These improprieties had no real
> meaning, but they had significance. In what way? In that
> they expressed a whole revolutionary situation.[11]

The details of social history and culture that Hebdige includes, function within his argument solely to show that punkers are "different". For Hebdige, the punker's only identity is that he or she is symbolically not the same as members of other social groupings. The punker's integrity is only in the homology between punk dance, clothes, music, musicians, decorations — all of which represent a zero degree of style. Punk is a symbolic challenge to a symbolic order (p. 92).

Hebdige's understanding of the nature of the symbolic order draws from the Birmingham Centre's earlier work on subcultures. In *Resistance Through Rituals,* the relation between the lifeworld and oral traditions of different groups, and the organized discourse of the agencies of middle class "hegemony" is written about as a matter of winning or losing "space". Working class subcultures are considered to win "space" within middle class hegemony. The metaphor was no doubt suggested by the fact that some of the groups actually do struggle to control certain physical areas: streets, pubs, and open areas. One also suspects the influence of the spatial image lying behind Althusser's formulations on different *levels* of practice — Ideological, Political and Theoretical. But the spatial model, in whatever form, is inadequate for the task of thinking through the lived contact of verbalized subcultures with teachers' talk, policemen's warnings, journalists' reports in print, coverage on the media — and not least, with cultural studies as a teaching and publishing institution. The sophisticated understanding by Raymond Williams and others,[12] of the literary nature of cultural studies is today only being gradually realized.

The world for Hebdige, however, is a symbolic *place.* His book is framed by the metaphors of Genet's prison-house, and punk by its unlocatedness (p. 120).The only symbolic action of subcultures is apparently that of *bricolage,* whereby materials are desituated and relocated side by side, to make something new. His conclusion is that: "The subcultural styles which we have been studying, like prison graffiti, merely pay tribute to the place in which they were produced . . ." (p. 136). In spite of his "linguistic turn" Hebdige's world is not one where people speak and write. Put another way, he is the only one who is allowed to write. If style is imagined to be a ghostly mantle passed silently from social collectivity to social collectivity, it is little wonder if from under it there echoes only a hollow laugh.

III

In the project of *Working-Class Culture: Studies in history and theory* is a profound sense of the historian's responsibility to the livid experiences about which he writes. The spatial metaphor for cultural hegemony is discarded and replaced by a new interpretation of Gramsci that stresses speech and textual communities. The argument is most explicit in Richard Johnson's essay, "Three Problematics: elements of a theory of working-class culture." Johnson starts by pointing out the limitations of the classical marxist texts for an account of culture and ideology. He reviews the practical achievements and limitations of the histories of culture of Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson on the one hand, and the theoretical work of Althusser and structuralist marxists on the other. Finally, he suggests that Gramsci's formulations on the diversity of political action, class, subjectivity, "common-sense," and language meet at least some of the structuralist protocols, while retaining the culturalist interest in lived experience.

Johnson's interpretation of "hegemony" breaks with the usage of *Resistance Through Rituals* by no longer being conceptualized as the attribute of a class. In another version of the same argument, Johnson succinctly describes how in place of "culture" or "ideology" Gramsci employs three terms:

> . . . 'common-sense' which refers, concretely, to the lived
> culture of a particular class or social group; 'philosophy'
> (or sometimes 'ideology') which refers to an organized
> set of conceptions with a more or less transformative
> relation to lived culture; and 'hegemony' which describes
> the state of play, as it were, between the whole complex of
> 'educative' institutions and ideologies on the one hand,
> and lived culture on the other . . .[13]

Although differences in political effectivity between organized "philosophies" and the worlds of common sense exist, all persons are philosophers to the extent that they employ language, share ways of seeing and doing things, and have opinions and beliefs.[14] Johnson does not claim to have solved the problem of Gramsci's alleged historicism. The extent to which hegemony is organized by a principle which articulates all the other elements of the ideological practice remains a dilemma, so that it is the expression of a fundamental class,[15] and the extent to which the establishment of a degree of hegemony changes the hegemonic discourse, as the educators are themselves educated. If Johnson does not answer the Althusserian demand for a scientific marxism, he is able to reformulate its notion of theoretical work. An

organized discourse necessarily takes on some of the "good enough for all practical purposes" character of the local understandings that characterize common sense, because that discourse becomes the common sense of a group of the intelligentsia. "Empiricism" (Althusser's bête noire) is then reformulated as a lack of attention to this shared common sense. The nature of these working understandings cannot be known *a priori* by a structuralist analysis, but is a matter for actual investigation.[16]

The project which Johnson suggests for cultural studies, then, is the study in detail of the relationships among organized "philosophies," politics, and lived common sense. As is often the case, the analysis of educational institutions raises issues of the relation between organized discourse and the conversations of everyday life. Johnson's thought-provoking essay, " 'Really useful knowledge': radical education and working class culture, 1790-1848," explores: . . . "the relation between various kinds of radicalism, understood as 'educative' or transformative ideologies, and the conditions of existence and lived culture of some of the groups which radicalism addressed" (p. 76). Johnson documents the attempts by working class artisans to substitute really *useful* education for the "provided" education of the Sunday schools, distributors of tracts and Mechanics Institutes. The essay's refusal to avoid difficult questions is a reminder that "provided" education is as poor for us today as it was for nineteenth-century radicals. If we really understand what Johnson is saying about certain nineteenth-century educational networks, this comprehension must alter our conception of the possibilities of educational practice today.

The radical educational pursuits that he describes were not separated out from the ordinary lifeworld. "The typical forms," he notes, "were improvised, haphazard and therefore ephemeral, having little permanent existence beyond the more immediate needs of individuals and groups" (p. 79). The educational resources of the family, neighbourhood and place of work lay beyond the control of the institutions of "provided" education. Once acquired, the reading habit needed only some kind of fellowship — the workshop experience seems to have been important — in order to survive. Occasionally, on top of these indigenous educational resources radical educational institutions developed: discussion groups, facilities for newspapers in pubs and coffee houses, Chartist or Owenite branches, travelling lecturers and, of course, the radical press. Johnson interprets the dual effect of the influence of family and friends, and of radical institutions, as forming an educational "network." Drawing upon Gramsci, he suggests that we consider the journalists, demagogues, organizers and "educators" of radical movements — especially Chartists and Owenites — as constituting political parties or proto-parties (pp.92-3).

Johnson writes quite frankly that:

> We do not really know how to 'think' the 'circuit' of such
> effects: from the conditions from which radical theory
> arose in the first place, through the educational practices
> themselves, to success or failure in actually forming
> people's principles of life and action (p. 91).

Patrica Hollis' formulations in *The Pauper Press* on the accumulation of a
textual repertoire by nineteenth-century radicals suggest the possible
usefulness here of the notion of folklore "conduits." In recent legend theory,
the "conduit" is held to be the lifeworld and socio-linguistic relations of those
who debate certain beliefs. Attention is thereby gained for the multiple generic
traditions (both spoken and published) through which such arguments are
actually conducted.[17]

The processes that interest Johnson — the relationship between organized
discourses and everyday speech and action — are often extraordinarily
difficult to document. Several of the essays in *Working-Class Culture* open up
historical topics for further investigation by contrasting the institutional
aspects of such "networks" as they existed in two different periods. Careful
examination of such institutions seems to indicate that the indigenous
experience/organized culture ratio changed in youth associations and in the
provision of leisure from the early twentieth-century to the period after the
second world war. The essays by Michael Blanch, Paul Wild and Chas
Critcher, present the necessary historical groundwork for further research
into how these changes in cultural "networks" were actually experienced by
those who were caught up in them. The thoughtful analysis of what modern
folklorists call "memorates" (anecdotes, reminiscences, life stories), collected
from those who lived through the period, could well provide a useful starting
place for this further research.

Michael Blanch's essay on youth organizations at the turn of the twentieth-
century in Birmingham and Manchester starts with a brief presentation of the
oral traditions and subcultural life of children of unskilled and semi-skilled
workers at the end of the nineteenth-century. The remainder of his essay
contrasts this indigenous culture with the extraordinary variety of youth
organizations that attempted to direct the leisure of working class youths, and
girls to a lesser extent, into "respectable channels." He demonstrates that these
organizations aimed in particular organize the children of unskilled and
semi-skilled workers in the centre of the cities, thereby facilitating their
mobilization at the time of the nation's greatest need: the first world war.

The next essay notes that the festival of Rushbearing, indigenous to many
north-western English towns, had by 1900 in Rochdale become only a name
"to refer to an increasingly commercial week of fairs, railway excursions and
holidays" (pp. 277-8, n. 32). This point sets the theme of Paul Wild's

"Recreation in Rochdale, 1900-1940," although his essay traces more subtle changes than merely the erosion of Rushbearing Week, a festival that dated back to before the Reformation. Wild deals with changes from the provision of leisure by the churches and chapels, co-operative and other societies, circuses and travelling cinema shows, to the provision of leisure by capitalist enterprises such as commercial dance halls and chain cinema companies. The older forms of leisure were localized and class or group based. Later capitalized forms were removed from any kind of popular control. Wild warns about drawing any simple conclusion from this fact:

> ... commercialized activities and commodities them-
> selves are often re-appropriated by their 'consumers'
> as a sort of raw material for further cultural work. One
> cannot 'read off' (as mass culture theorists have tended to)
> the use and indigenous meanings of mass-produced
> messages or objects.

There is need for further research on how newer forms of leisure provision are used and understood within the mundane lifeworld of a class or group.

Much of the fascination of Chas Critcher's fluent essay on "Football since the war" derives from his own interest in the soccer world. He deals in turn with the player, supporter, the effects of the mass media and international soccer. His discussion of the player gives a feel for the thrust of his argument. The professional footballer was traditionally a kind of working-class hero, barely removed from the economic and cultural background of those who paid to watch him. The abolition of the maximum wage for soccer players in 1960 marked a victory in their collective struggle to improve their situation. Life has changed for the new generation of star performers:

> The emphasis must be on 'everyday life'. It was not just
> a question of footballers having gained the right to more
> money and more bargaining power in relation to their
> employing club. What became gradually clear was that
> the 'new deal' had fractured the set of social and cultural
> relationships by which the player's identity had
> previously been structured (p. 163).

Critcher convincingly develops this theme throughout the essay: financial and contractual elements have changed the experience of the game today. Yet, as he also takes care to stress, contractual relationships have not simply replaced subcultural ones: "the loyalties of the existant footballing sub-culture are not

easily turned into the vagaries of consumerism. No Aston Villa supporter goes to Birmingham City except to support the away team" (p. 183).

Paul Willis' essay on shop floor culture returns us to the themes of Johnson's "Really useful knowledge." For both scholars history can be separated from ethnographic understanding only by silencing those whose speech is most vulnerable. The very choice of shopfloor culture as a topic is, in addition, a challenge to the separation of lived experience and a marxist analysis of production. For Willis, as for Williams in *Marxism and Literature*, there is no question of counterposing the 'cultural' with the 'productive' or the 'real,' as if the first had no actual constitutive role in the basic social relations which govern the form of our society (p. 186). Willis writes that "culture is the very material of our daily lives" (pp. 185-6).

We are back to the field of useful knowledge. Shopfloor culture is dominated by what Willis describes as the sheer mental and physical bravery of doing difficult work in hostile conditions (p. 189). There are many layers of meaning in this description. First, is the "mechanical, sensuous and concrete *familiarity* with the tools of production" (p. 191). Then, there is a "profound air of competence in the culture of the shop floor, a competence which always exists prior to the particular situation" (p. 191). Another aspect is competence with elaborate verbal and gestural exchanges: repartee, jokes, kiddings — the focus of industrial folklore studies in North America.[18] All of this shopfloor culture, all of this know-how, is above all *practical* knowledge: what you need to get through the job. Willis' essay itself is a practical piece of work, a clear challenge to the bad faith of uncritical ethnographics of the workplace experience in modern capitalism. Throughout the essay there are connexions made between the experience of manual labour and a certain sexual logic: "It's a man's want to be finished when he starts a job." (p. 197). Union organizers can work up and use such cultural forms:

> Certainly the union official or the shop steward uses particular shopfloor cultural forms to mobilize 'the lads' — the spectacle or bluff, or strong and combative language which are suffused with masculine feelings. This establishes a real expression of anger and opposition which may be very effective in the short term, and is certainly a force to be reckoned with (p. 198).

Willis holds this radical (albeit selective) use of workshop cultural forms, against the fetish of the wage packet, that tight-gummed compact brown envelope, a symbol of machimiso which "dictates the domestic culture and economy and tyrannizes both men and women" (p. 197).

The essay by Pam Taylor on domestic service between the wars, argues that the rearing of working class girls in their homes prepared them for a life in service and thus in one sense mothers contributed to the exploitation of their daughters. The domestic servants' feelings of inferiority, along with their loss of frequent contact with family and friends, contrasts sharply with the form of masculine shopfloor culture described by Willis.

The two introductory essays for *Working-Class Culture* display the contributors' reflexive awareness of the textual tradition in which their studies are inscribed. The reader should consider the lists of key texts included in both essays as a request that the present work be read in the context of what is best in the published traditions there assembled.

These essays by Chas Critcher and Richard Johnson comprise respectively a series of succinct commentaries on key sociological and historical studies. Their remarks argue for the heterogeneity or complexity of "working class culture," for the impossibility of separating culture and economic production, and for the authenticity of experience. In addition, a clear understanding of the educative and transformative purpose of their own writing is present:

> Is it not the responsibility of historians, especially socialist historians, to extend the emphasis of the new history forward in time, to complete the reconstruction of labour history, to realize the promise of oral history, to reconstruct, once more, the real connection between historians of the left and a socialist movement (pp. 65-6).

Much more is involved here than any vague sense of building on the work of past historians.

Take for example, Johnson's treatment of G.D.H. Cole's labour histories. He is critical because Cole "remained completely oblivious of culture as the common sense of classes and social groups" (p. 53). Nevertheless, Johnson's account of Cole is superb, because it integrates a sense of political situation, intellectual project, and the choice of a particular narrative form in which Cole wrote his books. Johnson's essay also deals with issues in more recent writings. He suggests that one way out of the current structuralist-culturalist impasse is to: ". . . slow the pace of speculation a little, be less destructively critical and consider the strengths and weaknesses of the two traditions by comparing some exemplary texts" (p. 70). Such philosophical common sense opens new directions for thought and research in a debate which has all too often been tedious and destructive.

The concluding essay of *Working-Class Culture* is by John Clarke. His "Capital and culture: the post-war working class revisited" argues the urgency

of grasping the interconnexions between the broad movements of capital and the experience of localized cultures. It is necessary to analyse the changes in the organization of capital that replace, for example, the self-assured, patronizing boss with the management scientists whose university training, erodes skills and pours scorn on the world of "experience" (p. 248). Even if Clarke occasionally falls back on certain of Althusser's formulations (for example, pp. 245, 252), the urgency of his task makes his essay of considerable value, both as an overview of a remarkable and innovative book, and as a place for further thought and research.

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Notes

1. Dell Hymes, "Folklore's Nature and the Sun's Myth," *Journal of American Folklore* 88 (1975), pp. 345-369.

2. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"*, trans. A.C. Miles, ed. Rush Rhees, Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979, p. 12e.

3. Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1961, p. 37.

4. "Interview with Edward Thompson," *Radical History Review*, 1976, p. 15. Cited by Richard Johnson, "Edward Thompson, Eugene Genovese, and Socialist-Humanist History," *History Workshop Journal* No. 6 (1978), p. 84.

5. In *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1978.

6. As well as the next reference see Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters*, London: New Left Books, 1979, pp. 170-172.

7. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, St. Albans: Paladin, 1975, p. 207.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

9. Perry Anderson, "Components of the National Culture," *New Left Review* 50 (1968), p. 50.

10. John Clarke, "The Skinheads and the Magical Recovery of Community," in S. Hall et. al., *Resistance Through Rituals*, London: Hutchinson, 1978, p. 99.

11. Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith, New York: Hill and Wang, 1968, p. 1.

12. Richard Hoggard, *The Uses of Literacy*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958.

13. Richard Johnson, "Histories of Culture/Theories of Ideology: Notes on an Impasse," in *Ideology and Cultural Production*, Michele Barrett, Philip Corrigan, Annette Kuhn and Janet Wolf (eds), London: Croom Helm, 1979, p. 74. The corresponding passage in the present work is on p. 233.

14. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, New York: International Publishers, 1971, p. 323.

15. Chantal Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci," in her (ed) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979, p. 194.

16. Alexander McHoul, "The Practical Methodology of Reading in Science and Everyday Life: Reading Althusser Reading Marx, "*Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 10 (1980), pp. 129-150. This article should be read in the light of John O'Neill's work on the social phenomenology of discourse communities. See his, "The Literary Production of Natural and Social Science Inquiry: Issues and Applications in The Social Organization of Science," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, vol. 6 (Spring 1981); "The Mutuality of Accounts: An Essay on Trust," in Scott G. McNall (ed) *Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979, pp. 369-380.

17. Linda Dégh and Andrew Vázsonyi, "The Hypothesis of Multi-Conduit Transmission in Folklore," in *Folklore: Performance and Communication*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos and Kenneth S. Goldstein, The Hague: Mouton, 1973.

18. *Western Folklore* XXXVII (July 1978), special issue on "Working Americans: Contemporary Approaches to Occupational Folklife," (ed) Robert H. Byington.

PARAPHRASE OF HERESY

Kenneth Gibson

Gerald Graff, *Literature Against Itself: Literary Ideas in Modern Society*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979, pp. 260.

> Even the most extreme esthetic contraventions no longer
> meet with serious resistance . . . sooner or later, and
> usually sooner, by way of detours via advertising, design,
> and styling, the inventions become part and parcel of the
> consumer sphere.
>
> — Hans Magnus Enzensberger

When Alice met up with Humpty-Dumpty and had that chilling debate over meanings and dominance, we saw perhaps for the first time in fiction an instance of the reigning ideology showing its hand. Certainly the question of who is to be master contains a covert but vital subclause: whoever is to be master controls, among other things, whether meaning is absent or present. If that idea becomes fashionable — if, in short the adversarial potential of literature really supports the dominant ideology — then a number of strategies, purportedly radical, follows in its wake. Crudely put, they are: (1) that literature has only a transcendental meaning; (2) that literature has only an immanent meaning; (3) that literature has no meaning, but great significance; (4) that literature has no meaning apart from the "bliss" or "erotic relations" of its several lexical parts. These positions, and more, attest to the surrender of criticism to the radical, "cooptative" manoeuvres of late capitalism. Indeed, Graff argues that capitalism is radical in that it can simultaneously absorb, and approve, any and all "adversarial" elements in literature *while pretending that such adversaries are still dangerous*. What gets lost in the welter of linguistic criticism, hermeneutics, structuralism, deconstructive poetics, neo-Marxist analysis, and so on, is one important thing we all know of, or about, even if we cannot possess it: something called *reality*.

The fate of reality is one of Graff's prime concerns in this study: "the secret and unacknowledged collaboration between rebellious literati and their philistine detractors remains an unwritten chapter in the social history of art." This plot, if that is the word, has to do with the autonomy of art; that is, its powerlessness. And Graff cites as the beginning of this plot the Romantic Movement — an event which now begins to look like a secular version of The

Fall. Romanticism helped to shunt aside the function of literature as a witness to, and commentator on, the real events of the busy world — a curious fate for a movement so centrally devoted, at least at the beginning, to liberalism and even Jacobinism. The writer was found awkward "on the margin," from which he or she could harrangue, shout slogans, or foment revolt. The "wise doubt" in Wordsworth may have enabled him to accept a sinecure from the Post Office. Critical strategies — some of them, like Arnold's image of Shelley as an "ineffectual angel", abusive — would eventually "accomodate" the impotent figure and return it safely home. Swinburne starts on brandy, but winds up sipping "small beer."

Furthermore, Graff postulates, these accomodative tactics have not changed over the last century, despite belief to the contrary. If this assertion is so, then "modernism," and especially what Graff calls "the myth of the Postmodern Breakthrough," are dubious entities. Rather than on a leading edge of perception, we are at the tail-end of the Romantic Movement — as, perhaps, the Beat Generation showed us. Critically, however, this tail-end position consists largely of the denial of any reality-function in language and, by the same logic, literature. Graff turns his coldest anger on the refusal of much contemporary criticism to consider that *language* has anything to do with *things*, (the brutal data of a world which is, whatever else, very much *there*). The Saussurean position that all relations between signifier and signified are arbitrary — that the diachronic is an anthology of the synchronic — may be irrefutable, but it does not begin to answer the whole question. If words and things "link up" only by accident, how to explain why some linkages are more convincing, more pleasant, more striking, than others? If all is hazard here, then why bother to write well? Why search out the most precise wording when the only question that seems to matter is, Who is to be master? More bluntly, why is there "something more" in Frost than in Ella Wheeler Wilcox? No one would seriously argue that Frost was simply contriving "self-consuming artifacts" rather than poems that move through a perceived reality which is nonetheless not wholly created by the poet.

The function of criticism at the present time seems to be to *finish* (partake of its creation) any work of art, and, by this operation, make both itself and the work inoperative. Any theory which so takes over literature in this way, whatever its radical pretentions, is merely a rhetorical imperialism of the sort that Edward Said describes in his influential book, *Orientalism* (1978). An approach arguing that a work of fiction can express *only the dominant ideology and no more*, does quite the same, as does the "deconstructive" approach, well exemplified by J. Hillis Miller, which begins in frank, historical accounting and then, as in his work on *Sketches By Boz*, argues that the book is full of winks, nods, smirks, and nudges — all of them Dickens' way of letting us know it is "only fiction". We don't have to take it seriously, or even enjoyably; it has power to do anything except convince us.

And so, wherever we are, we aren't really here. History is elsewhere, neither centre nor margin. If literature is again central to our lives, it is so at the cost of being without force and meaning, easily consumed and as easily forgotten. To be told that language is wholly self-referential and thus "meaningless" is to be told covertly that literature is meaningless to read. And we wonder that the schools are in trouble. Graff's fierce and lucid polemic is a direct challenge to the fashionable treasons of our present theoretical constructs.

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CINEMA AS SIGN AND LANGUAGE

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Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema,* translated by Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok, Mouton: The Hague-Paris, 1974. pp. 304

In order to evaluate and to take a critical stance in regard to Christian Metz's contribution to the theory of film, it is important to take into account the intricate and moving reality of French culture-politics. It is also essential to remember that it was mainly through the works of the French theoretical investigation, relying on theoretical premises originating in other fields. This blending of interdisciplinary methods has been a source of vitality and dynamism. Methods coming from psychology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy and general aesthetics permitted the understanding of the different aspects which govern the study of film as an art, as a social phenomenon and as a political object. Metz's passage from the examination of the linguistic-structural aspects of film to the psychoanalytical assumptions about film as an object of cultural consumption, indicates the complexity of the theoretical examination of this medium. If Metz's theoretical assumptions have been found to be valid by some and inappropriate by others, through his work new debates have ensued, and from these discussions, additional contributions to film theory have and will be born. No film theoretician in the last fifteen years has caused so much uproar. The controversy around Metz's writings has led to a re-examination of the basic and traditional assumptions about film. Metz's terminology, borrowed from Sausserian linguistics and Lacanian psychoanalysis, is foreign to film and to our own culture. To make the terminology simpler implies co-opting this methodology to purposes which are foreign as well. The demands made on the reader of cine-semiotics and psychoanalysis serve to activate the subject into a self-creative object. The act of de-coding the Metzian text can become a fascinating voyage into obscure regions which the film itself tries to hide. If one accepts film as a constructed object, it is not difficult to accept its theory as a constructed text to be de-codified in the same way as its object of enquiry the filmed product.

In the series "Approaches to Semiotics", Thomas A. Sebeok (Research Center for the Language Sciences, Indiana University) published in 1974 Christian Metz's *Language and Cinema.* This dense and complex book posits the principles of a film syntax by using Saussurean linguistics as a point of departure. Metz's cine-semiotics has been repeatedly attacked and defended by film theoreticians and critics. Reading *Language and Cinema* poses a number of difficulties related to the format of the book and to the material.

Language and Cinema was originally published as *Language et cinéma*[1], in a series entitled "Langue et langage", a highly technical series of linguistics works. It is one of those typical "grammar-like" publications that the French favour, intended for study purposes rather than "pleasurable" academic reading. In *Language and Cinema* Metz raises the question of definition again — "cinéma: lanque ou langage?" (cinema: language or language system?) — and as any grammarian will do, he leads the reader through many concepts, notions and examples, with frequent cross-references. Since he has to assume that film theoreticians are not necessarily familiar with linguistics, he proceeds to explain some of the these terms in relation to their traditional usage. These explanations produce a rather ponderous style.

Metz opens his book by exposing the "rather deceptive state of research on the subject" of film theory and film language. He writes: "What one most often calls a 'theoretician of the cinema' is a sort of Renaissance man, ideally possessing an encyclopedic knowledge and a quasi-universal methodological formation" (p. 10). For Metz the film theoretician has to be a film historian, a film economist, a film aesthetician and a film semiotician - in which case he is also interested in film discourse. The person who has been able to do all this synthesis is Jean Mitry, whose *Esthétique et psychologie du cinema* (1963 and 1965) is the most comprehensive general theory of film. Taking his cues from Mitry's work, Metz proceeds to define the language of cinema and its specificity by applying notions of semiotics. He reiterates that the "unsystematic" qualities of film lie in the difference of cinematic language from other "spoken or written" languages. The book concludes with Metz's general statements about a possible semiotics of the cinema:

> One of the goals of this book was to show that the problem of cinematic signification cannot be convenient-ly treated if one holds to the definition of language as a system of signs destined to be used for communication. It only really begins to take shape if one has recourse to more precise notions . . . and if it is relocated within the larger framework of present semiotic research. A cinema is not *a* system but contains several of them. It seems not to have signs . . .; in addition, the domain of *signification* largely goes beyond that of signs. (p. 207)

Having outlined the differences between spoken language and the language of cinema, Metz then proceeds to define the elements that compose film syntax. By giving great importance to film narrative and to films of fiction, because "the cinema tells stories", he deals with syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures. The specificity of cinema, according to Metz, lies in a system of codes and subcodes that provide signification. These codes are specific

(cinematic codes and subcodes like moving images, sound, music, etc.) and non-specific (codes from other "languages"which are historical, literary or cultural.) Metz sees his work as a semiotician in the analysis of signification coming from the "melange" of codes. By placing such a strong emphasis on cinematic codes, Metz neglects the notion of the image. One of the reasons for this neglect, is that he sees the image as analogous to reality. Thus the problem of "impression of reality" is still very much present in Metz's early work, leading him to say that the "cinema is a language without signs" since the signifier and the signified are one and the same. One should refer to the work of the younger Roland Barthes for the point-of-reference from which this analysis evolves. Since Metz defines the "cinema as a language without signs" and identifies the "paradigmatic poverty" of the cinematic language, he is led to define his cine-semiotics in terms of the syntagmatic relations of various codes and subcodes.

In an earlier work — translated into English as *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*[2] Metz outlined the "grande syntagmatique" in an analysis of Jacques Rozier's *Adieu Philippine* (1961). This "grande syntagmatique" is the breakdown in narrative cinema of the organizational system of spatio-temporal logic within the area of the sequence. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes of organization of the film text are important to Metz since it is the basis for a scientific approach to narrative cinema. By identifying the segments of the film, Metz isolates and describes the cinema's rhetorical "writing techniques". However, this taxonomy of denotative structures — "la grande syntagmatique" — denies the expressivity of cinematic language because it only considers the narrative codes common to all "classical films". By favouring the syntagm over the paradigm, it denies the fact that the language of cinema is a signifying system. By attaching himself to a descriptive method whose purpose is that of examining the denotative level of cinema, Metz leaves untouched the problems of connotation, of metaphor and of symbol.

Metz's work is thus devoted to study of cinematic codes specific to film; while the more general cine-semiotics (that of the British writers of *Screen*) is constantly involved with codes that cross a range of languages (codes of narrative , for example). In *Language and Cinema*, Metz summarizes three points of interest to semiology, three concepts that are essential to the study of film fact:

> (1) film texts which may present different degrees of material scope, the privileged one being the single and entire film (the notion of 'film' in its distributive sense); (2) textual systems, i.e. film systems which correspond to these different texts; and (3) non-textual film systems

> (codes), which themselves present different degrees of generality (the distinction between codes and subcodes), and which according to the individual case may be cinematic or extra-cinematic. Those which are cinematic constitute, as a block, the 'cinematic language system'. (p. 150) The main task of the semiotics of the film fact can be summarized as follows: "to analyze film texts in order to discover either textual systems, cinematic codes or subcodes." (p. 150.)

The term "code" is used by Metz in order to define a system of possibilities, choices, or restraints, — a system bearing equally on paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. He defines code as follows:

> What one calls a code is a logical entity which has been constructed in order to explicate and elucidate the functioning of paradigmatic relations in texts, and also to explicate and elucidate the functioning of syntagmatic relations in the same text. The code contains in itself the intelligibility of the syntagm as well as that of the paradigm, without itself being either a paradigm or a syntagm. (p. 162)

This type of definition allows for the following propositions, which are essential to Metz's semiological framework: (a) a series of codes organize a textual system (the film); but, (b) the textual system is not a code; (c) codes are manifest in several languages - this permits Metz to discuss intertextuality - and (d) the combination of codes might itself be understood as a code, as a "system of intercodic relations."

The difficulty in understanding Metz's approach to semiotics lies in the fact that all of his work is conceived as a "theory in progress", constantly opened to new questions, and its problematic extending itself further into different aspects of the film process. Cine-semiotics as defined by Christian Metz has to be situated within the context of the history of film theory. His earlier work is closer to Andre Bazin and the phenomenological tradition of film theory in France than it is to the formalist theories of S. M. Einsenstein. His more recent work should be linked to the psychoanalytical tradition of Freud and Jacques Lacan and the post-Saussurean semiotics of Kristeva and Derrida in France.

Theoreticians have pointed out the shortcomings of Metz's cine-semiotics and his work has been revised by himself (see below) and through other publications, like *Screen* in Great Britian. Film theory has shifted towards a different approach to semiotics. Italian and French semioticians (those of *Cahiers du Cinéma*) have examined the etiological and cultural implications

of certain cinematic codes like montage, Renaissance perspective, two-dimensionality of the frame, thus questioning the "a-ideological and a-historical" Metzian framework. Yet in his recent work (e.g. *The Imaginary Signifier*) Metz has began to examine cinema as a signifying practice, working from a Lacanian psychoanalytical approach "History/Discourse: Notes on Two Voyeurisms"[3] and *The Imaginary Signifier* are Christian Metz's first psychoanalytically-related texts. Both are very personal, with Metz professing his love for the cinema and hence using a first-person address similar to Jacques Lacan's *Seminaires*.

In "History/Discourse: Notes on Two Voyeurisms" Metz starts writing:

> I am at the cinema. The images of Hollywood film unfold
> before my eyes. One of those narrative representational
> films - - not necessarily made in Hollywood - - that we
> think of when we talk about 'going to the pictures'; the
> type of picture that it is the function of the film industry to
> produce. Not simply the film industry, but, more widely,
> the whole contemporary *cinematic institution*. (p. 21)

The concept of cinematic institution is Metz's most original contribution to the psychoanalytical theory of film. By introducing this notion, he emphasizes the role of the viewer, the spectator, as an essential aspect of the cinema as a signifying practice. The term "cinematic institution" should not simply be understood as the 'industry' which produces the cinema but also as "the mental machinery - another industry - which spectators 'accustomed to the cinema' have internalized historically and which has adapted them to the consumption of film."[5] The cinematic institution comprises an "outer" machine (the cinema as an industry), an "inner" machine (the spectator's psychology), and a "third" machine (the cinematic writer - critic, historian, theoretician). In presenting this "third machine", Metz can examine his function as a writer of the cinema. His "intention to establish, maintain or re-establish the cinema (or films) in the position of good object"[6] is linked to his love for the medium. In this context he writes:

> To be a theoretician of the cinema one should ideally no
> longer love the cinema and yet still love it: have loved it a
> lot and only have detached oneself from it by taking it up
> again from the other end, taking it as a target for the very
> same scopic drive which had made one to love it.

The dryness of Metz's earliest work is replaced in his later texts with a recognition of engagement and of commitment on the part of "Metz the theoretician" as an investigator of the imaginary.

The cinema understood as an "imaginary signifier" has double implications for the theoretical study of film, because it applies to two basic assumptions. The cinema is a technique of the imaginary "because most films consist of fictional narratives and because all films depend even for their signifier on the primary imaginary of photography and phonography."[8] In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the imagery is the realm of the "mirror-phase" which corresponds to a primary narcissism in which every "other" is seen as the same as the subject, and difference is not recognized. Metz situates his psychoanalytical approach in the tradition of Freud and the developments brought about by Melanie Klein in England and Jacques Lacan in France. Thus the introduction of concepts such as "pleasure", the "symbolic" and the "imaginary", "specularity", "fetishism" and "voyeurism" are to be understood in relation to the approaches mentioned above. As defined by Christian Metz, the "cinematic institution" is a highly self-sufficient machine that tends to perpetuate itself, taking over the mechanisms of its own reproduction. The memory of satisfaction derived from one film becomes the projected goal in viewing another. The dominant cinema - the Hollywood narrative tradition — functions in this way. People go to see films to derive pleasure from an experience which Metz compares to the Freudian "fort/da game". Freud's "pleasure principle" is crucial to Metz's *The Imaginery Signifier*. Pleasure (jouissance) is identified with a reformulation of the relation among desire, memory and the satisfaction of the need, producing perception. The subject (spectator/viewer) is constantly attempting to repeat an experienced moment of pleasure. To define this "pleasure principle" in the cinema, Metz has recourse to the "inner" (or second) machine.

> The second machine, i.e. the social regulation of the spectator's metapsychology, like the first (machine), has as its function to set up good object relations with films if at all possible: here too the 'bad film' is a failure of the institution: the cinema is attended out of desire, not reluctance, in the hope that film will please, not that it will displease.

Metz's important contribution in *The Imaginary Signifier* is that he abandons the purely linguistic approach to the cinematic signifier by locating it in the act of perception. To do this, he has to clarify once and for all the "mirroring" effect of cinema. The process of identification in film is compared by Metz to the Freudian mirror-stage. Although the spectator is absent from the screen, he/she identifies the object on the screen (the images). The spectator is an "all-perceiving" subject: he/she knows that he/she is at the cinema and this knowledge is dual (but unique).

> I know I am perceiving something imaginary (and that is why its absurdities, even if they are extreme, do not seriously disturb me), and I know that it is I who am perceiving it. This second knowledge divides in turn: I know that I am really perceiving, that my senses are physically affected, that I am not fantasizing, that the fourth wall of the auditorium (the screen) is really different from the other three, that there is a projector facing it . . . . that it is in me that it forms up into an organized sequence, that therefore I am myself the place where this really perceived imaginary accedes to the symbolic by its inauguration as the signifier of a certain type of institutionalised social activity called the 'cinema'.[10]

Christian Metz has not left aside phenomenology as a conceptual part of his theoretical framework. In *The Imaginary Signifier* he has redefined phenomenology in psychoanalytical terms. The subject's perception, dependent on the "perceptual cogito" as much as on the cinematic institution and the physical apparatus of film, in turn relies heavily on a period of social history and a technology. An overview of film history and the history of cinema's criticism and theory allows Metz to disclaim some of his early statements, especially those regarding the notion of "textual system" and the function of codes which he defined in *Language and Cinema*. The distinction between text and textual system is more or less discarded by Metz in *The Imaginary Signifier*. The process of signification is seen as a dynamic process in the same way as analysis is conceived as a dynamic process in psychoanalysis. A symptomatic reading of a film permits the theoretician/ critic to acknowledge the banal but true observation that the form of a film tells us as much about its content as about its true meaning. Thus the study of the textual system should be an articulation of the manifest signifier (the sequences of the film) and the latent signifier anchored in the apparent data (the film script).

Raymond Bellour's use of psychoanalytical concepts in film study as in his analysis of a sequence in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*[11] pre-dates Metz's above mentioned texts. Other texts by Bellour have followed, all of which have been recognized as important contributions to the psychoanalytical study of film. Bellour's articles have been recently compiled in *L'Analyse du film*.[12] Have the use of psychoanalytical concepts contributed to any further understanding of the cinema? The work of theoreticians such as Bellour, Stephen Heath and Bill Nichols have furthered the establishment of a practical methodology of film analysis by the inclusion of psychoanalysis into a structuralist framework. Its application by feminist critics and film-makers

such as Laura Mulvey and Claire Johnston, has permitted a non-sociological approach to the problem of woman's representation in the cinema. It is in these two particular fields, textual analysis and feminist criticism, that Lacanian and psychoanalytical theory have made their strongest imprints. Lacanian psychoanalysis and its emphasis on the formation of the subject and the acquisition of language, permits Metz and the others to formulate the function of the unconscious in the signifying process triggered by the cinematic experience. The failure of semiotics and structuralism to incorporate the spectator/viewer/subject into the production of meaning accounts for this introduction of psychoananlysis to film theory.

The Imaginary Signifier with its statements and rebuttals ends typically in a "provisional conclusion". Headed by a titled paragraph " 'theorise', he says .. .", Metz states again his personal involvement with film theory. A psychoanalytical approach to cinema permits him to understand the "conditions of desire of whoever makes himself its theoretician. Interwoven into every analytical undertaking is the thread of self-analysis."[13] Metz goes on, in what is a pure Lacanian position, to define the theoretical inquiry of film.

> "I have loved the cinema, I no longer love it. I still love it. What I have wished to do in these pages is to keep at a distance, as in the scopic practice I have discussed, that which in me (+ in everyone) *can* love it: to retain it as *questioned*. As questioning, too, for the wish to construct the film into an object of knowledge is to extend, by a supplementary degree of sublimation, the passion for seeing that made the cinephile and the institution themselves."[14]

To love the cinema and to understand the cinema are two closely related aspects of the vast social and psychological machine of the cinema.

Given this conclusion, one can almost forgive Metz for boring and confusing his readers during his cine-semiotics period. Certainly one can appreciate the basic desires involved in any throretical study of cinema, and understand the pleasure provided by film.

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Notes

1. Christian Metz, *Language et cinéma,* Paris: Larousse, 1971.

2. Christian Metz, *Film Language: A semiotics of the Cinema,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

3. Christian Metz, "History Discourse: Notes on Two Voyeurisms," in *Langue, Discourse et Société,* edited Julia Kristeva *et. al.,* Paris: Editors du Seuil, 1975: and translated by Susan Bennett in *Edinburgh '76 Magazine,* No. 1.

4. *Ibid., p. 21.*

5. Christian Metz "The Imaginary Signifier," translated by Ben Brewster, *Screen* 16, No. 2 (Summer 1975), pp. 14-76, p. 19.

6. *Ibid.,* p. 21.

7. *Ibid.,*p. 26.

8. *Ibid.,* p. 15.

9. *Ibid.,* p. 19.

10. *Ibid.,* p. 51.

11. Raymond Bellour *Cahiers du Cinéma* (Paris) No. 216, October 1969.

12. Raymond Bellour *L'Analyse du film,* Paris: Editions Albatros, 1979.

13. Metz, "Imaginary Signifier" p. 75.

14. *Ibid.*

THE CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Robert Kett

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Culture and Society,* translated by Richard Nice, London and Beverly Hills, Sage Publications 1977, introduction by Tom Bottomore, pp. xx + 248.

Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* translated by Richard Nice, Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp. viii + 248.

Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction,* Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1980, pp. 670.

Pierre Bourdieu's work — there are fourteen books written alone or in collaboration with others — add up to the most sophisticated attempt anywhere to provide a sociological analysis of contemporary culture in practice and as boundary, demonstrating an intellectual scope and a sense of *l'homme sensuel* which is unparalleled.

Bourdieu's task is not simply to provide a map of cultural manifestations (in a way that all too often seems the provenance of much structuralist and semiological writing), nor the slightly more ambitious exercise of defining cultural acts against what might otherwise be considered social ones (the ultimate *raison d'être* of much Marxian interpretation of culture) but nothing less than to develop an integrated theory of creativity as *practice.* He thus integrates approaches developed by cultural anthropologists, Durkheimian sociologists, educational theorists and historians of ideas, as well as by those whose domain is loosely bounded by communications theory, cultural studies and the various sociologies of the arts. In so doing, Bourdieu is careful not to be trapped into accounting for the contextual significance of 'great' writers, artists or musicians (as, for example Lucien Goldmann or Adorno did[1]) nor into evaluating the long-term socio-political importance of artists according to their use of form (a risky business as writers as diverse as Lukacs, Raymond Williams or John Berger [2] have demonstrated). Still less is he seduced by the psychological (and largely Freudian) temptation to account for creativity in terms of individual life forces and contrasting energies, an exercise which has aided the wide-ranging critiques of Arthur Koestler and Anton Ehrenzweig.[3] Pierre Bourdieu would view these exercises as tangential to the concerns of sociology, and thus outside his purview. Equally he would dismiss

hermeneutical or some phenomenological sociologies as essentially avoiding the central issue, even though much of what he writes owes something to phenomenology, albeit an anthrophenomenology. The central issue is stated succinctly in an early essay: "the sociology of intellectual and artistic creation must take as its object the creative project as a meeting point and an adjustment between determinism and a determination."[4] In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu, using largely anthropological material, attempts a general theory which tries to tease out the interconnecting cultural determinisms from which a determination is possible. The book is the most comprehensive attempt by Bourdieu at establishing the grounds for his entire writing on culture and creativity, though the reader who is new to Bourdieu's work may be puzzled by it as an introduction to concerns which are, after all, apparently to do with painting, photography, pedagogy, the Academie Française, and "audience research" in cultural behaviour. Although Bourdieu's primary task is the study of creativity, his ultimate goal is nothing less than the cultural anthropology of advanced industrial society. The *Outline of a Theory of Practice* establishes his anthropological credentials for the wider task; his studies on education and culture in France provide forays into those themes which will make that wider cultural anthropology possible.

Bourdieu's early studies of Algerians[5] led into studies of the symbolic codes established by the French to control themselves and others. The tension between the *habitus* of the colonizer and the *habitant* of the colonized is evident throughout his work, and the language of control which Fanon read as requiring a response both violent and symbolic, is seen by Bourdieu as involving a control system necessarily both symbolic and violent. The so-called "French Cultural" writings by Bourdieu are explorations in the *violence symbolique* and the possible strategies of liberation, or rather the strategies by which people seek to liberate themselves. Bourdieu, like most Algerians, is no romantic. Strategies are based on realistic appraisals of past experiences. Culture is no easy release from the constrictions of the everyday; it contains the discordant voices of the still imprisoned. After all, Camus was both Algerian and French, and Ben Bella, only recently released when of little use to anyone, was once a liberator. "The colonized come to *wreak* violence on the colonizer," seems to paraphrase Sartre's introduction to *The Wretched of the Earth*[6]. Pierre Bourdieu is that colonial, at a site of forceful intellectual vitality, who wreaks symbolic violence on France and all of us. To take the Creative as one's point of departure is to ask "at what point does the field that established the boundaries for my release still bind me to that world which will appropriate me yet?" Bourdieu is probably right not to take language as a metaphor for this exercise (after all, language begs the question of meaning which is ultimately transcendental) but to take ritual and symbol. His starting point is pre-structuralist or, possibly, pre-surrealist. The theoretical and

temporal world that he inhabits is not Magritte or Breton, but Delville and Redon, not the abolition of institutions and forms but their internalization and hence their symbolization. In our everyday lives we do not worry about art or 'writing-degree-zero', but rather more about the everyday sense of this institution or that belief-system and its meaning to us. Structuralism apparently took this transvaluation away from us and made the *codification* of our myths more significant; surrealism made our efforts wholly insignificant because time had passed us by. Bourdieu situates these and other intellectual fashions in the now. They become simply part of the symbolic capital upon which we draw evidence of ideas derived from our situated and hence economic realities. But how do we situate them? Significantly, Bourdieu's case hangs on the act of situation.

The analysis in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* rests on the concept *habitus* which is both the reproduction of "regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of [particular practices] generative principles" and also an adjustment "to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation". In other words *habitus* produces practices which reflect not only other peoples' productions over which we have little control (because they are the artifacts of an inherited situation), but also our own productions of meaning in confronting the situation itself. It thus encompasses both the taken-for-granted boundaries of action, "a commonsense world endowed with the objectivity secured by consensus on the meaning of practices and the world;"[8] a "history turned into nature,"[9] and also the necessary inventiveness of our own particular conditions.

The ultimate issue rests on two problems: the interconnecting symbolic orders which impose reality — through *habitus* — on specific situations, and the extent to which, within their commonsensical daily strategies, agents are aware of this essentially political order, either as arbitrary or "as a self-evident and natural order which goes without saying and therefore unquestioned." The clue to understanding symbolic control systems lies in the recognition that they can be either covert or overt: "symbolic violence is the gentle, hidden form which violence takes when overt violence is impossible."[10] *Habitus* represents our inheritance of a taken-for-granted symbolic order which establishes the normative rules of our daily practice. If, in the inventiveness of our own situation, we question those universals the asymmetrical distinctions which are embedded in the symbolic orders become manifest. Bourdieu puts it:

> 'Goods are for giving. The rich man is rich so as to be able to give to the poor,' say the Kabyles. This is an exemplary disclaimer: because giving is also a way of possessing (a gift which is not matched by a counter-gift creates a lasting bond, restricting the debtor's freedom and forcing

> him to adopt a peaceful, cooperative, prudent attitude) . .
> . . The endless reconversion of economic capital into
> symbolic capital, at the cost of wastage of social energy
> which is the condition for the permanence of domination,
> cannot succeed without the complicity of the whole group:
> the work of denial which is the source of social alchemy is,
> like magic, a collective undertaking. As Mauss puts it, the
> whole society pays itself in the false coin of its dream.

The point at which we reject this dream leads to a conflict between symbolic violence and the practical, inventive alternatives.

Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture, presents the issue of symbolic violence as central. The theme is the system of higher education in France. The topic is the extent to which the system imposes its values through structures which in turn are internalized by the participants of the system. As we know from Bourdieu's earlier work.[12] the social institutions provide a framework which destroys the innate (i.e., socially conditioned) intelligence of the student in order to replace it with another space which he is obliged to live through in order to make sense of himself. Thus we have the diachronic self brought to bear on the synchrony of now. *Reproduction* is an illustration of how that process works as part of a wider system which not only legitimises the *status quo*, but imposes a thought process which comes to be seen by those who acquire it as normal and universalistic. And the importance of the claim to universality is that it rests on a power system which is not naked, but concealed. Thus the student who is introduced to philosophy comes to accept a process of reasoning as normal because he knows no other; the pedagogical structure taught him to think in a particular way which in turn became his own thought processes. In this respect, as in many others, the educational system is merely an extension of the political and economic. The trick of politics is not manifest, open violence, but the insidious sense that what is routine is commonsensical, that what is commonsensical is, in fact, true. Politics, like education, can demonstrate that those who fail were not worthy, that the natural "home" of a particular group is in this or that place; that intellectual competence is the preserve of those who have been initiated into the correct symbol systems.

> The privileged instrument of the bourgeois sociodicy
> which confers on the privileged the supreme privilege of
> not seeing themselves as privileged, manages the more
> easily to convince the disinherited that they owe their
> scholastic and social destiny to their lack of gifts or

> merits, because in matters of culture absolute dis-
> possession excludes awareness of being dispossessed.[13]

In an important respect Bourdieu's work is an elaboration of Gramsci's theory of Hegemony: the ruling values of the power elite are not simply 'ideological' (conjuring up the idea of manifestos and coherently worked out programmes) but the institutional patterning of values and ideas into the normative structures of society. It is thus absurd to study ideas or literature or myths as if they were self-contained documents. Both hermeneutics and structuralism fall into this trap. Such an exercise is bound to ignore culture as practice or what Marx in the "Thesis on Feuerbach" termed "sensuous human activity."[14] The document or art-object becomes a mirror through which the world is viewed; it becomes a substitute for studying process, practice and social interconnections. The product of social action becomes the determinant of that action. In structuralist terms the significant dominates the signifier. Bourdieu's critique of structuralism — and hence of Marxist-structuralism — is that it presents a lazy, simplistic shorthand for studying codes, myths, ideologies which say little about the social processes in which they are embodied. By claiming universalism, structuralism ultimately abdicates moral criteria and represents the new treason of the intellectual. The pretence at creating a *science* of codes and mythologies not only distorts our perception of society, it also distances the intellectual from society, preserving the academism of his practice. Nothing that he says challenges us, but rather confirms *our* isolation because he validates himself in a non-dialectical methodology.

Bourdieu focuses on the intellectual as he inhabits his institutions, performs his routine functions and practices cultural dominance. Because the intellectual is a product of a social process, Bourdieu analyses that process. Because culture is wider than him, Bourdieu studies that too, all of it. *La Distinction* is the product of ongoing research (most of which appears serially in *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*) into the different layers of critical judgement in French society — eating, holidays, films, music, travel, painting, housing, clothing, hairdressing, museums, reading. It is an in-depth account of a society *doing* culture. Because culture is essentially the product of institutional distinctions, Bourdieu traces the means by which taste is manufactured and transformed. Before we can begin to understand the creative and the transcendental we have to understand how the entire cultural apparatus is structured through the practices of its members. The basic theme of "Intellectual Field and Creative Project" or the general propositions of *Outline of a Theory of Practice* are here worked out in a bold confrontation with a people in the act of making sense of themselves, of a people being made sense of through the institutional practice of others.

Bourdieu commences with a social aesthetic outlining a theory of the inheritance of cultural capital and its use. This theory, of course, is of the bourgeoisie and the ways that it establishes its cultural dominance by laying claim both to the titles and the real estate of culture. By appropriating culture in the manner of heirarchical distinctions of differential significations, the bourgeoisie is able to claim for itself a cultural heritage even if it was in no way responsible for generating it. By claiming culture as capital and real estate, it is able to deny culture as production and process. It transforms experience and practical acts into a symbolic capital which enhances its own self-image. Thus to understand culture we have to understand it both as a system of classification but also of social class (or the condition of existence) and its reinterpretation involves both its superimposition on us as an imposed judgement but at the same time as the actively constituted interpretation of a way of life. From a book replete with examples, perhaps one will suffice as illustration.

The body is something we inherit, but also something that we spend much time, energy and money in transforming. In one sense we could see the body as the product of social conditioning — we dress according to the influences brought to bear on us. But this perception would only be partly true; the body as biology, as mirror of our inner selves in a sense betrays us to others. But even this "true" self is a social product — of childrearing practices, eating habits, social class, sex, race and so on. Thus the visible camouflaging of the body and the inherent (apparently natural) proper ties, are products of different social processes, which in turn must be placed in a wider context of power and cultural distribution. My location in any social system involves both appropriating symbols of appearance from it, but also projecting my self in terms of my perception of my place in it, so that my bodily relations express not only my self as a product of interlocking social forces, but also of my consciously willed sense of my self in that system. Thin/fat; short/tall; male/female; black/white, become so-called 'natural' dichotomies which force us to confront the consequence of heredity and the fact of social position. The culture of the body therefore relates to the ways that we play out these polarities as necessary features of class and power distinctions.[15]

La Distinction's strength lies in the force of methodology by which Bourdieu teases out the broad lines of his conceptual approach, which involves seeing social issues both in the widest possible terms and in the minutest of details. And its value is in pitting the consequences of collecting the *minutiae* against the validity of the conceptual structure. General theories should not be a master plan into which we slot our empirical data, but rather a heuristic device which enables the data to reveal itself. This data reveals itself to us through the photograph, the interview, the advertisement, the fashion show, the painting and so on. But the interpretation must involve a continual

interaction with the conceptual apparatus. Bourdieu dispenses with the long-established dichotomy between 'theory and research', just as he dispenses with dichotomies such as 'culture' and 'mass culture' or 'ideas' and 'practice'. Both as a problem of research and as a methodology he presents us with culture-as-practice.

At the same time Bourdieu leaves us with one epistemological problem which has exercised other writers on culture. If culture is about control and power, the distinction between determinism and determining, does Bourdieu suggest that all questions of value are ultimately reduced to class position? In a curious way, although he argues against "art" because it is a negation of the social world, ("an imaginary anthropology obtained by denial of all the negations really brought about by the economy"[16]) the relativity of creative making sense becomes the only absolute that is visible. In a concluding chapter on "elements of a 'vulgar' critique of 'purer' critiques", he makes a plausible case for a social relativity of evaluation, but it seems to this reviewer at least that the issue is by no means resolved. Class and power may be useful tools for demonstrating the relativity of apparently absolutist values, but is the consequence that there are no absolutes at all? Bourdieu's contribution is surely to provide the most comprehensive groundwork by which that question can be sensibly addressed.

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Notes

1. See Lucien Goldmann, *The Hidden God*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965; T.W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music,* New York: Seabury Press, 1973.

2. See G. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, London: Penguin, 1962; Raymond Williams, *Drama From Ibsen to Brecht*, London: Chatto, 1971; John Berger, *The Success and Failure of Picasso*, London: Penguin, 1968.

3. Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*, London: Hutchinson, 1964 and Anton Ehrenzweig, *The Hidden Order of Art*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967.

4. Pierre Bourdieu "Intellectual Field and Creative Project", in Michael F.D. Young (ed) *Knowledge and Control*, London: Collier Macmillan, 1971, p. 185.

5. His study of the Algerians, written at about the same time as Frantz Fanon was putting together *Les Damnés de la Terre* (Trs. *The Wretched of the Earth*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) was published as *The Algerians*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1962.

5. J.P. Sartre, "Introduction", F. Fanon, *op cit.*

7. *Outline, op cit.* p. 78.

8. *Ibid*, p. 80.

9. *Ibid*, p. 78.

10. *Ibid*, p. 196.

11. *Ibid*, p. 195.

12. Bourdieu, "Intellectual Field" and "Systems of Education and Systems of Thought", in Young, pp. 189-207. The detailed studies on which these observations rest are: *Les étudiants et leurs études* (with J.C. Passeron), Paris: Ed. Mouton, 1964, and *Les Héritiers* (with J.C. Passeron), Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1964.

13. *Reproduction*, p. 210. Sociodicy: justification of society, formed by analogy with theodicy. (Translators' note, p. 176)

14. Karl Marx: "Thesis on Feuerbach", in Saul K. Padover (ed) *The Essential Marx*, New American Library, 1978, pp. 304-306.

15. Much of the discussion of the culture of the body appears on pp. 189-248.

16. *Outline*, p. 197.

JOHNSON ON CAMBRIDGE AND KEYNES

R.T. Naylor

Elizabeth S. Johnson and Harry G. Johnson, *The Legacy of Keynes*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978.

Probably no Canadian social scientist of the post war era has invoked the respect or provoked the ire of as many people in as many places as did Harry G. Johnson in his professional life. He was an unparalleled pedagogue, a monumental synthesizer, and a prodigious writer. However, he was a master of words, rather than a source of ideas; and hence he left little of any real originality in the field of economic science behind him. He put the discipline *per se* ahead of himself and dedicated his professional life to the clarification and advertisement of other people's ideas. Thus his main influence derived from his capacity to persuade others to a point of view of which he was a propagandist, rather than from original contributions. His political and pedagogic influence was considerable in his lifetime both in Canada and around the world. But even without the presence of the force of his personal conviction and energy, even without credentials as an original scholar, his influence on politics and ideology is likely to be long enduring — by virtue of that very capacity he had of persuading others in positions of political or ideological power of the appropriateness of an often superficial and pernicious point of view, but one which happened to coincide with the political and economic interests of those in positions to wield such power. Within Canada certainly he will be alternately revered and loathed for many years to come: revered by those members of our academic establishment who are mesmerized by Johnson's apparent "success" (defined as acceptance in the world centres of economic, political and ideological power); loathed not only by his ideological enemies, but also by those of his own persuasion who were left behind in the scramble for such "success", and who are thus forced to redefine their career goals within the parochial context Johnson spent so much vindictive energy in belittling. Johnson was a Canadian Gulliver, a giant among the little people who populate Canada's universities, and a little man pledged in the service of the truly powerful in the real world of military and corporate behemoths outside his own country's borders.

To call forth the depth of feeling that he did, both positive and negative, is in itself a noteworthy achievement which demands explanation. Part of the answer lies in the sheer volume of his written output, albeit such a judgement must be tempered by the fact that many of his scholarly articles were really the same scholarly article, by the fact that his books were largely collections of

that same article, and by the fact that much of his professional time seemed to be spent creating permutations and combinations of and on a few simple themes. Part of the answer lies in the arrogance with which he pushed the point of view he held with such religious conviction, though the sin in this respect was partly atoned for by the fact that his proselytizing was ideologically rather than personally inspired, by the fact that his objective was to demonstrate the validity of other people's invalid ideas rather than promoting his own. Part of the answer lies in the message itself — the right wing liberalism, the lauding of the mythology of the free market, and the unabashed apologetics for American business imperialism — that invoked approval in many and anger in many others. Part of the answer lies in the fact that for all of his blind arrogance as an ideological servant of the free market mechanism, Johnson could also be a penetrating and deadly accurate social critic, making acerbic judgements on the social and academic pretenses of others, thus earning himself the plaudits of likeminded but meeker souls and the hatred of his victims and their fellow travellers.

In the last mentioned guise, as judge and critic of the personal and political, social and scholarly faults of others, Johnson made his final contribution to economic literature. His last book, co-authored with his wife, the posthumously published *The Legacy of Keynes* is also the most useful in judging Johnson himself, both the man and his influence; it is the most personal and at the same time the most sweeping in its professional range of all of his books. In it we find a young graduate of the University of Toronto and the Canadian army in 1945 approach the thoroughly Keynesianized world of English economics; we watch him immerse himself to the best degree a "colonial" could in the pomp and empty circumstance of academic life in the most prestigious centre of English Keynesianism, Cambridge; we see him becoming increasingly repelled by the intellectual mediocrity and social pretense of the institution, and subsequently by the society as a whole; and we are ultimately appalled to observe him seeking refuge in the American neoclassical orthodoxy from the demonic influence of which Cambridge after Keynes claimed to be saving the world. The immediate and vitally important question arises — to what degree did Johnson's subsequent uncompromising and uncritical adherence to the canons of American orthodoxy result from a genuine and dispassionate intellectual conversion, as opposed to personal revulsion from the nature of English society in general and Cambridge in particular? The question is not a frivolous one, as the tone and content of the book makes clear.

As a book *The Legacy of Keynes* tends to be uneven, being a collection of essays, most of them previously published to suit many different times and purposes. The essays are sometimes repetitive, and their flow of argument occasionally disjointed. Elizabeth Johnson contributed a group of sketches

dealing predominantly with Keynes, the man, while Harry Johnson focussed on Cambridge and the economics of Keynes. However the division of labour between them is not a rigid one. Elizabeth Johnson's essays contain much useful insight into Keynes as a political being, while Harry Johnson makes a highly successful attempt to locate Keynes's economics in the social assumptions he acquired from his milieu. (Harry Johnson also manages to settle quite a few outstanding personal scores in a vicious and often hilarious way in the process.) A joint essay on the social origins of the *General Theory* is likely the strongest in the book. Despite certain leaps in the argumentation and gaps in the material, there is nonetheless a basic continuity to the essays, assured by the close relationship of the several themes interwoven through them. These themes are: the social boundaries typical of English society and Cambridge; Keynes and the economics of Keynes as derivative from those social boundaries; Keynesian economics (as distinct from the economics of Keynes) and its political success as an outgrowth of Cambridge academic politics and the incestuous links between Cambridge and British governing elite; and the failures of Keynesianism in a modern world, evidenced, as Johnson sees it, by the failures of British economic policy, in contrast to the alleged political and technical superiority of American mainstream economics. How Johnson might have revised his opinions in this regard in light of the recent evidence of even greater policy disasters once the British government began pursuing a policy line more in tune with Johnson's ideology, one can only speculate. These themes are worth close examination.

Cambridge: Its Life and Times

Keynes' Cambridge of the 1930's had changed but little when Johnson, newly discharged from the Canadian army, arrived there in 1945. Nor indeed was it much different in the late '60's and early '70's when I experienced its charms. Cambridge, like Oxford, was and is more than merely an educational institution of debatable merit. It was (is) a finishing school in which the offspring of the British upper classes were (are) trained in social etiquette and an understanding of their natural position as heirs to an era and an empire that they would be surprised to learn no longer exist. The point was (is) not to learn something, but rather, as Johnson confesses to have realized only much later, to simply be there, and take part in its "academic" and social life. That life then (and now, though to a lesser degree) revolved around a set of autonomous colleges, the nature of which in relation to their socio-economic setting provides an important insight into the character of their academic progeny. The colleges were feudal institutions living off the income from endowments of land. (Indeed one of the things that made Keynes a legend at Cambridge was his success as bursar of King's College in shifting his college's endowment

from land to securities, moving it into the twentieth century years before other colleges woke up to the possibilities of such a transition, and laying the groundwork for a controversy over the college's portfolio of South African securities that flared up briefly in the late 1960's.) The tribute payments the colleges regularly exacted from the peasantry working their land went partly to support the academic and social endeavours of the fellows of the college and such elected graduates of the "public" school system they condescended to admit into their presence, and partly to meet the minimal subsistence needs of the bedmakers, porters, kitchen staff and gardeners that the colleges drew from the surrounding urban population. Indeed, in my time, a deeply rooted belief among the few politicized graduate students (largely foreigners) was that the university deliberately blocked the industrial development of the town and environs to assure a continuing supply of cheap, menial and docile labour for college service.

The stifling nature of the social milieu was enhanced by its physical isolation and the lack of telephones and automobiles. This isolation was defended by those at the top of the academic heap as essential to the undistracted pursuit of true intellectual labour — undistracted, that is to say, by any contamination from contact with the day to day realities of normal life, save that carefully laundered through the tory *Times* each morning. (Under-graduates in the 1960's showed their solidarity with the radicalisation of student politics elsewhere at the time by shifting their reading preference to the liberal *Guardian*.) Thus the social and physical inbreeding of the British elite was reinforced by their college association, bolstering their conviction of their natural superiority *vis à vis* the lower orders who impinged upon their lives by sorting mail, making beds and fetching tea.

Despite the obvious, continual fluctuations in the composition of the undergraduate population, college life was remarkably stable — in good measure because of the permanent nature of the academic-administrative staff. This stability in turn explains a great deal about the peculiar viciousness of interpersonal relations among the academic staff (of which Johnson's book itself is a striking affirmation). Once an aspiring academic has survived the initial purges through carefully cultivated deference to whatever faction of the already firmly ensconced was ascendant at the time, it was then assumed that he (the male form is almost inevitably the correct one in this context) would be a fixture of Cambridge life for several decades. Given the normal expectation of dealing with the same small set of colleagues for life, and given the insularity of the context in which one had to deal with them, the fact that academic politics were characterized by a remarkably high development of the arts of petty, personal vindictiveness should be no surprise. Personal conflicts, which throve in such fertile soil, would be turned into artificial differences of intellectual stance on third rate issues in order to give them a socially

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respectable basis. These rivalries could even spill over into such matters as the setting of examination questions, with candidates judged by their degree of acceptance or rejection of some rival's doctrines. It was from such a happy institution, where isolation from reality and intellectual narcissism flourished, that Keynesian economics was launched into academic, professional and political respectability.

Keynes and the Unnecessary "Revolution"

The economics of Keynes culminating in the *General Theory* — which his more enthusiastic followers and, indeed, Keynes himself, for reasons of self-promotion were wont to laud as "boldly revolutionary —" Harry Johnson prefers to type as "mildly revisionist." The Johnsons attempt to deduce Keynes's economics, from three sets of influences. One was the character of Keynes himself, a brilliant applied theorist and a political opportunist whose ideas were in a constant state of flux and tailored to fit whatever seemed to be the outstanding current political issue — the reform of the gold standard in Britain or India, the economics of reparations, the requirements for re-establishing the Victorian monetary order, the evil consequences following from someone else's efforts to re-establish the Victorian monetary order, the ill effects of protection, the benefits of protection, the adverse effects of excessive government expenditure, the desirability of deficit financed government expenditure, and the essential primacy of the full employment goal among social objectives.

A second set of influences derived from the social assumptions Keynes inherited from his temporal, spatial and social context. The primacy of the full employment goal resulted from Keynes's "aristocratic Victorian view of the economic requirements of a happy society;" and, more specifically, from the view that "social happiness consists of a job for everyone in his appointed place in life." Thus while a modern economic liberal would be concerned with rendering more equal, opportunities for economic and social advance, Keynes with his ersatz-aristocratic mien and inherited Victorian concern with social stability focussed instead on the prerequisite for maintaining an ordered hierarchy of employment. This perspective was further reinforced by the fact that, in common with others of his professional and social milieu, Keynes saw the working class solely in the role of college servants, duly deferential to their natural superiors and happy to reciprocate the favour of guaranteed employment plus fringe benefits by abstaining from inflationary wage demands that would threaten the socio-economic pecking order.

Capitalists were, to Keynes, of a radically different genre. Drawn from among the weaker intellects of Keynes's own social class, they were by themselves, intrinsically incapable of making the sorts of decisions that

assured social progress and, more importantly, social stability. Fortunately, the potential problems posed by the inherent deficiencies of English capitalists could be solved by the fact that the best brains of the English elite showed a natural propensity to forsake the squalid world of money making and instead embrace public service and the academic life. Hence the government, influenced by the academic establishment (most notably Keynes himself) could make appropriate policy to guide the terms on which the lesser social orders, workers and capitalists, would interact in the broader society.

Keynes's personal capacities and social assumptions by themselves cannot account for the final form of the *General Theory*. To complete the picture a third set of influences must be introduced: those deriving from the on going crisis of the British economy after the first world war that turned Keynes's social prejudices into practical economic policy advice or, more accurately, into rationalizations for existing political practices disguised in the form of a scientific revolution.

The mass unemployment that afflicted the British economy in the 1920's, well before the onset of the Great Depression, Johnson attributes to two major factors. One was the impact of the long term industrial decline of Britain, begun in the late nineteenth century and becoming acute in terms of its social effects in the 1920's. The second was the result of conscious political choice, namely the government's yielding to the pressure of the *rentier* class in restoring gold convertibility at too high a parity. Sensible, institutionally oriented economics would focus on the first factor with its implicit critique of the laws of operation of market economy; Johnson, of course, focusses on the second, for it gives him an opportunity to assail governments for their misinformed meddling with the omniscient market mechanism. The consequences of over valuation were: to raise the level of unemployment by cutting into the already limited export markets available to an already senescent industrial structure; to tilt the income system stream in favour of the *rentier* class (including academics and civil servants); to generate acute social tensions by upsetting the natural order of social classes; and to help perpetuate the myth that Britain was still a wealthy and powerful society. Without over-valuation, says Johnson, there would have been no mass unemployment, and therefore no need for a "revolutionary" theory to explain it. For a century and a half the accumulation of capital and entrepreneurial capacity in Britain had concentrated on certain specific lines of activity that complemented the most predatory imperialism known to modern human history. Yet for Johnson the economic and social consequences of the absolescence of the resulting industrial and financial structure, as well as the rapid erosion of imperial power that accompanied it, could have been obviated simply by letting the free market mechanism select the optimum rate of exchange! It is this mixture of insight and inanity that makes Johnson such fascinating reading.

Taking Johnson's argument at face value, it is then only necessary to add to the basic error of British monetary policy an equally basic but more far reaching error in American monetary policy — the action of the Federal Reserve in allowing a monetary contraction in 1929 to deepen into an enormous economic crisis — and Britain's massive unemployment experience was deepened and then generalized throughout much of the world. That experience thereby set the groundwork for the subsequent elevation of a theory of dubious relevance for a particular time and place to the status of a scientific revolution of universal applicability. All of the factors generating the economic crisis that led to the framing of the *General Theory*, Johnson claims, are fully explicable in terms of orthodox monetary theory. The problem was: first, that no one bothered; and second, if they had, the structure of academic politics in Britain would have precluded their ever being taken seriously.

Much of what Johnson has to say is simply apologetics for the revival of monetarism in the U.S., another attempt by the American antediluvian neoclassical mainstream to reassert its technical and political superiority over British rigor-mortis Keynesianism, and a put-down of the traditional Keynesian concern with the level of employment in order to give covert sustenance to the latest neoclassical fantasy, the presumed "natural" rate of unemployment — a type of construct that reaffirms the primacy of the market and the implicit social justice of free market solutions with that fervid conviction that only fully tenured academic economists can muster. But much of Johnson's critique goes well beyond such objectives, and provides a healthy corrective to the usual kind of fawning appreciations that dominate scholarship dealing with Keynes. It also helps explain the great transformation of Keynes, the strictly orthodox monetary and fiscal conservative, completely in tune with nineteenth century "sound money" prejudices, as he appears in the *Tract on Monetary Reform* (where inflation is protrayed as the consequence of a conspiracy by debtors to defraud creditors, aided and abetted by fiscally irresponsible governments who prefer printing money to politically unpopular decisions like raising taxes) to the fiscal and monetary "radical", as he appears at first blush in the *General Theory* (where inflationary spending by governments and deficit finance are heralded as the means by which the power of the creditor class to block social progress can be undermined). In between the two books (when Keynes simply converts cowboys into Indians, and then Indians back into cowboys again, leaving the confrontation between them essentially the same) lay a series of economic events of great import: an overvalued exchange rate in Britain, apparently exacerbating an already acute industrial crisis; the example of Germany where a public works program (and *not* arms expenditure, as apologists for British and French military incompetence tried to claim subsequently) financed by government deficit spending had already demonstrated the way out of the

Great Depression; and the final collapse of the old gold standard which opened the way across western Europe and the U.S. for government deficits and inflationary monetary policy without the discipline formerly imposed by the requirements of convertibility of paper money into gold. Nor, as the concluding sections of the *General Theory* make clear, was Keynes unaware of the long legacy of more acute economic analysts than the British academic establishment could tolerate, who had argued for just the measures that Keynes made respectable by removing their political bite.

The result is the hotch-potch of technical confusions that went into the making of the *General Theory*. Essentially what was involved was an attempt to take elements of an apparatus concocted for entirely different times and purposes, dress it up in Marshallian garb oblivious to the inconsistencies thereby created and coax or twist the resulting hybrid into supporting an empirical conclusion that in the 1930's was undeniable even in the isolated world of English academia: namely the conclusion that, yes indeed, capitalism could generate and sustain for long periods of time a large pool of involuntarily unemployed labour. If at any point prior to 1935 Keynes and his colleagues had put down their teacups long enough to ask a college servant about capitalism's capacity to generate a secure source of employment, the *General Theory* might have been born years before. But then, college servants are not supposed to pronounce on such weighty matters and, if they do, certainly should not be given much consideration. That the inescapable conclusion was finally faced is not really to Keynes's credit, as to the complete discredit of his profession that it took so long. And the manner in which Keynes chose to finally face up to it is again hardly a circumstance for professional self congratulation.

Indeed Keynes's reputedly great intellectual generosity in acknowledging his debt to Malthus could be interpreted more cynically as merely a ploy to avoid the charge of plagiarism. Apart from his substitution of *rentier* capitalists for Malthusian landed proprietors, and the different institutional mechanics of money creation, precious little differentiates Keynes's whole analytical apparatus from that of Malthus — except that Malthus's was analytically more profound, represented a much greater and more radical breakthrough in terms of intellectual history, was inherently more consistent, and was on balance a good deal more convincing.

Political conclusions based on fait accompli observed elsewhere still required rationalization in terms of a type of economic theory that the British establishment could swallow. Thus, John Hobson's observation that, given different marginal propensities to consume of rich and poor redistribution of a given level of income would inflate total demand, could be easily rendered respectable by recasting it in terms of an aggregate consumption function with no reference to the distribution of income. Inflationary policies that led to the

euthanasia of the rentier class as well as plugging the gap in the circular flow of income and expenditure may have had the same social, economic, and financial implications as Major Douglas' call for major institutional restructuring to effectively destroy the private financial sector, but it was certainly much easier to sell to the relevant authorities. Giving old concepts like the marginal productivity of capital new names that were sufficiently esoteric to command a confused respect; adding to them "a college bursars' theory of interest" rate determination and an investment function that reflected jointly the presumed stupidity of entrepreneurs and the depression induced, temporary glut of loanable funds available at the going rate of interest carried the process further. Then it sufficed to put Keynes's social prejudices to work *vis à vis* the working class, and to translate their presumed social deference in the face of an increase in the demand for labour into an infinitely elastic supply at the going wage, and the *General Theory* was born. It was now merely a matter of getting it enthroned as the basis of a new orthodoxy.

The Triumph of Keynesian Economics

Johnson sees a number of reasons for the rapid conquest of the economics establishment, and governments, by the canons of Keynesian orthodoxy. One obvious one was the apparent failure of the hitherto prevailing orthodoxy (a failure he feels to be more apparent than real) to account for the existing crisis circumstances. Another was the laundering of formerly unacceptable political propositions through the pen of an eminent Cambridge don. And most important was the structure of Cambridge academic politics and the tight relationship Cambridge economists had with the centres of political power in Britain. (The lack of such an incestuous relation between one or a few key academic establishments and government is offered as one major reasons why Keynesianism failed to become the overwhelming orthodoxy in the U.S. that it did in Britain.)

To triumph abroad, both in Britain at large, and in the outside world, Keynesianism had first to triumph at home, inside Cambridge and the British economics establishment. The war at Cambridge began with the harassment of the principle opposition figures, such as Dennis Robertson, an harassment begun by Keynes and kept up after his death by his followers. The most important of these disciples was Richard Kahn, whose role it became to manage faculty politics in the interest of the Keynesians, especially the neo-Keynesians, Joan Robinson and, later, Nicholas Kaldor. The techniques varied from control over the granting of tenure and promotion, to the conduct of the so-called "Secret Seminar" which everyone was expected to know about and then judge their own merits by whether or not they had rated an invitation to participate.

Once triumphant at Cambridge, the new orthodoxy had to be sold elsewhere in Britain. One reason for its success lay in the fact that up and coming junior faculty would seize upon it to circumvent the power of their already established senior colleagues and use it as a device for pole vaulting into their own sinecures. Furthermore, cheered on by a weak Oxford, the very power of Cambridge in the British economics establishment assured the ready propagation of its doctrines. Cambridge controlled the major journal, and Cambridge economists not only found the easy road to publication of their articles by making them conform to the canons of Keynesian orthodoxy, but even Cambridge unknowns could get into the act by being selected to review the books of non-Cambridge scholars and judge them by the "correct" set of criteria. Cambridge also controlled the choice of the British economists who took part in the International Economics Association Round Table. And, by virtue of its tight relationship with the governing elite, Cambridge could assure the stifling of any real debate over the direction of British economic policy. Last but not least of the reasons for the rapid success of Keynesianism in Britain was the fact that it gave England one last claim to continued, contemporarily relevant greatness in a world whose political, social and economic evolution had largely passed the country by. Keynes was a substitute for a lost imperial grandeur.

However, Johnson contends, that the Keynesian economics that conquered the British economics establishment had little relationship to the economics of Keynes. Thanks to the structure and operation of Cambridge academic politics it fell to Joan Robinson and Nicholas Kaldor, whom Johnson refers to as Marxo-Keynesians, to carry the torch. Joan Robinson is described as someone who abused the principles of academic discourse and distorted arguments freely for her own devices. Starting from Gerald Shove's demolition of neoclassical wage theory that resulted from his simple observation that capital is a produced factor of production and hence its marginal product is not independent of its price, Cambridge and Joan Robinson in particular rose to dizzy heights of analytical fancy. Her contribution to economic analysis consisted of a priori left-wing political pronouncements followed up with technically incompetent economic reasoning, all prompted by "the mistaken belief that to prove capitalism to be logically impossible is sufficient to dispose of its existence." As to the much touted "victory" of Cambridge, England led by Joan Robinson over Cambridge, U.S.A. in one of the most sterile debates to ever bore a generation of undergraduates and, incidentally, one that had been quietly resolved by Wicksell nearly a century before, Cambridge, England is described as "a voice crying nonsense in an imaginary wilderness," kept in the "zombie business" by Cambridge, U.S.A.'s silly mistake of undertaking to debate it. "Nonsense is nonsense, no matter how prestigiously pronounced; so why take it seriously

and reconstruct it to the point where you make mistakes yourself?" As to Joan Robinson's equally illustrious cohort, Johnson pronounces the following judgement:

> Nicholas Kaldor, on the other hand, being a man who rolls with the times fairly fast, decided early on that capitalism actually was working. So for him the problem was, given that it works, it cannot possibly work because the theory of it is right. It must work for some quite unsuspected reason which only people as intelligent as himself can see.

As to the overall success of Cambridge and the neo-Keynesians in getting the message across, Johnson concludes that "with enough prestige inherited from superior minds, and with enough vociferousness, you can make a lot of the profession think it must be important."

Most of this is true enough as far as it goes, but it does not go nearly far enough. For in his zeal to propagandize on behalf of American orthodoxy and against the closet communists he perceives in neo-Keynesian garb, Johnson completely misses the real reason for the success of the neo Keynesians — namely that students seeking empirical relevance in their studies of political economy and faced with the choice between Cambridge and Chicago, inevitably pick the lesser of two patent absurdities. As to the criticism that Robinson, Kaldor and their fellow travellers substitute *a priori* political pronouncements for economic reasoning, anyone remotely acquainted with Johnson's writings must come to the conclusion that the real sin that Cambridge commits is not political pronouncement *per se*, but the specific political pronouncements it actually makes, and whether these pronouncements are relatively direct in a form in which all could judge them, or carefully covered up by an array of pseudo-scientific manipulations of imaginary constructs. As to his denunciation of the academic totalitarianism of Cambridge politics, his own record was such as to immediately bring to mind the old proverb about glass houses and the pastimes of those therein. For it was in Johnson's hands that LSE in the late sixties joined the general American post-Samuelsonian retreat into abstract theorizing and petty geometrical manipulations and away from the real world of concrete policy concerns and institutional analysis. By the time Johnson and his associates finished remoulding the graduate program of that once illustrious academic institution, it was possible for a student to acquire one of the most prestigious graduate degrees in the world while remaining blithely unaware that that world consisted of anything but two commodities, and two "factors" of production or, if he enrolled in the international trade program, two countries

as well, the interaction of which took the form of an intensely competitive struggle within the confines of a perfect square. Finally, one must never forget that Johnson is a far from disinterested critic of English Cambridge's position in the capital theory controversy. For if it really is impossible to draw a smoothly downward sloping marginal product of capital curve, then the bulk of Johnson's own writings join the rest of the neoclassical trash heap.

The response of Cambridge to Johnson's attacks has been quite feeble over the years. Partly this weakness is due to their vain hope that, in conformity with the type of logic embodied in their theoretical models, if they ignore him, he will just go away. Partly it is due to their inability to come to terms with Johnson's style, with his refusal to play the game in terms familiar to the proverbial English gentleman academician — for Johnson's attacks strike not merely at their economic reasoning, but also at the lifestyle and social assumptions that conditioned that reasoning. Partly it is due to the fact that a response to Johnson would probably have made no difference to his thinking in any event.[1]

The Legacy of Johnson

Harry Johnson was above all else a liberal, not only in terms of a passionate, if anachronistic and naive belief in individual initiative in the context of an economic system based on free enterprise and the market mechanism, but also in the positive sense of seeing equality of opportunity (rather than guaranteed employment, for example) as the paramount social objective. In that capacity he was inevitably disturbed by the implicit, and often explicit statism of Keynesian economics. And he was thoroughly disgusted by the pomposity and social pretense of the English academic elite. But his antagonism towards statism and elitism as he met then in England, specifically at Cambridge, converted him implicitly and indeed sometimes quite explicitly into an apologist for American corporate imperialism which was in its own way equally statist and elitist. How a man of such formidable intelligence and learning and of such acute social perspicacity with respect to British post-imperial pretensions could advocate in its place something as crudely retrograde as American cold war liberalism is indeed an enigma.

Johnson himself says little or nothing about the reasons for his conversion. Certainly the gap between Cambridge neo-Keynesian orthodoxy and American neo-classical orthodoxy is a considerable one. And clearly if one wants to avoid dealing with economic reality while at the same time assure one's unimpeded, unmolested ascent up the promotion and tenure ladder, one can retreat with equal ease to either of the two sets of empty ideological boxes, depending of course on which orthodoxy one's senior colleagues prefer. For someone starting down the road Johnson himself travelled in the late '40's and

'50's, there were important aids to making the wrong decision. There was in general the disintegration of political economy as an organic discipline in the wake of the onslaught of Cold War ideology and the concomitant rise of American behaviourism, which forced economists to become technocratic specialists, each manipulating a small part of a whole he could never appreciate, and each growing more hysterically defensive about his peculiar cognitive monopoly the greater his own sense of irrelevance became. But that is the story of the social sciences in general in the post World War Two era. For economists there were additional milestones on the road to futility. Economists of Johnson's generation had Samuelson's *Foundations of Economic Analysis* as a handy counterpoise to Keynes; and Samuelson's text fulfilled admirably its annointed task of separating students even further from reality than English general equilibrium theory of the Hicksian school already had. Then too there was James Meade's monumentally trite study of the theory of international trade and finance, a study which Johnson at the beginning of his career heartily belittled, but then went on to laud as the greatest epic in English economics since the *General Theory* itself. And indeed Johnson's own contributions to the development of economic analysis as he defined it, consisted of little more than further manipulations of Meade's geometry. Yet given the presence of these milestones to mark out the path of his intellectual evolution, the question remains — what started him on it.

Perhaps part of the answer lies in the fact that Johnson was a Canadian who learned, for good reason, to despise many things Canadian. As a result he retreated to a world in which countries were reduced to homogeneous lumps of "land", capital, and labour, and human behaviour itself reduced to a Hobbesian state of nature modified only by the market replacing the omniscient, omnipotent sovereign in holding the social fabric together. He therefore meted out especially venemous treatment to those who asserted the uniqueness of national units and national characters in the face of the tendency of the market system to universalize on terms set by its most powerful participant. Some of the impetus towards nationalism in Canada he correctly perceived to be the result of a failure to produce other things worthy of national pride, although one suspects that Johnson's definition of objects worthy of national pride would be a contentious one, to say the least. He also imputed nationalism, again to some degree correctly, to a plot by greedy Bay street capitalists and second rate members of the cultural establishment to protect their incomes at the expense of the rest of the population. And he was clearly revolted at the frequent fawning on things British that the Canadian intellectual and cultural elite engaged in to offset the overwhelming influences emanating from the United States. His accusation that Canadian Keynesians were being "seduced into colonial service to a moribund cultural imperialism" could have been just as easily directed at the CBC and the Toronto cultural

establishment. Given that Canada's destination appeared to be inherently and inevitably colonial, then "there seems little to be said in favour of switching our colonial attachment back to dependence on a manifestly non-viable imperial centre." Perhaps when all is said and done the answer to the enigma lies in the fact that Johnson, like Nicholas Kaldor in Johnson's critique, rolled with the times quite easily. Faced with the facts of world power politics and their handy rationalization by the canons of neoclassical orthodoxy, he simply accepted the strongly seductive logic of annexationism. From the vantage point of 1981, it seems hard logic to refute; and, if so, then whatever the contemporary irrelevance of other elements of the ideological orthodoxy Johnson so fervidly espoused, on at least one point, history will bear him out.

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Notes

1. One interesting illustration is provided by an anecdote that circulated at LSE in the late 1960's. At a banquet at which both Johnson and Nicholas Kaldor were present, Kaldor reportedly rose after dinner and announced that he would like the opportunity afforded by their joint presence to reply to some of Johnson's attacks. The performance duly began — only to have the audience break into smothered laughter; for Harry G. Johnson, true to form, had overimbibed before dinner and consequently slept heavily and noisily through Kaldor's attemped rebuttal.

HOMO LUDENS

Alkis Kontos

Bernhard Suits, *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.

> We must not . . . promise a
> fool's paradise
>
> Max Weber
>
> The realm of freedom actually
> begins only where labour which
> is determined by necessity . . .
> ceases
>
> Karl Marx

In his fable of the ant and the grasshopper, Aesop with classical brevity, precision and power advocates prudence. The moral of the story is quite unsettling, even if irrefutable. The brief and painful encounter of Aesop's grasshopper with the ruthless wisdom of the ethic of human existence, work, is the following: it is winter; the ant colony is airing its corn. The grasshopper approaches the colony and with humility begs for a grain of corn. One of the ants asks how he had disposed of his time during the summer days; why he has no winter stock. The grasshopper answers truthfully; he has passed away the time merrily in drinking, singing, and dancing; he never once thought of winter. The pleasure and joy of the moment prevailed. The ant replies with uncompromising righteousness: they who drink, sing, and dance, in the summer, must starve in the winter. Such was the sudden and complete moral education of the grasshopper regarding the fateful realities of summers turning into winters.

This confrontation between the life of the ant and the life of the grasshopper, between the prudential use of summers and the joyful but ultimately remorseful neglect of winters - indeed total forgetfulness of them - is what Professor Suits wishes to re-examine and evaluate in a new light. The ant's triumph and the grasshopper's ridiculous defeat are unacceptable. Unlike Aesop's fable, here the grasshopper's summer life is elevated to a philosophy of life, a veritable critique of the ant. Suits animates his protagonist with intelligence, skill and refreshing wit. The book is impressively designed; Frank Newfeld's illustrations complement Suits's humour and philosophic ironies.

The result is an original, challenging exploration. It is a conscious imitation of the Socratic dialogue and irony. It is lively, theatrical, Pirandellian; it is unorthodox in form; non-academic, non-scholastic. It is a serious philosophic quest.

The main characters in this play are: The Grasshopper, the practitioner and exponent of idleness, and his two disciples Prudence and Skepticus. Suits's narrative begins just where Aesop's fable ends. The Grasshopper admits that his contact with the ant colony, his request for food, was a mistake; he confesses his weakness. But he rejects the prudence exemplified by the way of life preached by the ants. The supposed superiority of this way of life is vehemently criticized by the Grasshopper. His whole teaching advocates nothing but idleness. The Grasshopper admits the fact of winters but he does not think it ineradicable. For "it is possible that with accelerating advances in technology the time will come when there are in fact no winters" (p. 8). He persists therefore defending the logic of his position even if inapplicable in the present. The Grasshopper's position is that work is not self-justifying and thus his idle way of life, is "the final justification of any work whatever" (p. 9).

Skepticus points out that this insistence on either a life devoted exclusively to play or exclusively to work is unreal. Work and play are interwoven. As the Grasshopper's death from starvation is drawing closer he cryptically suggests that "everyone alive is really a Grasshopper" (p. 9). Then he narrates to his disciples a recurring dream of his, an enigmatic parable, and bids them farewell. The dream parable is this: it has been revealed to him "that everyone alive is in fact engaged in playing elaborate games, while at the same time believing themselves to be going about their ordinary affairs" (p. 10). Whatever occupation or activity you can think of, it is in reality a game" (p. 10). In the dream he proceeds to persuade everyone of his newly found truth. But upon being persuaded each person ceases to exist. In despair and utter solitude he awakens to find the world as before. "But is it, I ask myself, just as before? Is the carpenter on his roof-top simply hammering nails, or is he making some move in an ancient game whose rules he has forgotten!" (p. 10).

Skepticus and Prudence attempt to resolve the Grasshopper's riddles and paradoxes about play, games, and the good life. They resolve that play amounts to "doing things we value for their own sake" and work amounts to "doing things we value for the sake of something else" (p. 15). Play, ultimately, is treated as equivalent to leisure activities (p. 15). The distinction is drawn between playing and playing games, the latter being merely one kind of leisure activity. Moreover, the two disciples determine that "the life of the Grasshopper ought to consist" not simply "in leisure activities, but in playing a *game*" (p. 16). Thus game playing, "and not merely playing in general" appears "to be the essential life of the grasshopper" (p. 16). This argument leads to a systematic exploration of the meaning and nature of games. Skepticus

engages in a diligent anamnesis — relying on his notes — of his May-September discussions with the Grasshopper about games, leading to a general theory of games. This discussion constitutes the main and most extensive section of the book, furnishing the basis for the resolution of the Grasshopper's dream.

A general working definition of games, attempting to identify the nature of games including rules, intentions, means, seriousness of playing, is presented. Regarding rules we are told that the players "accept rules so that they can play a game, and they accept these rules so that they can play this game" (p. 31). A comprehensive definition is advanced which undergoes progressive refinement and clarification:

> to play a game is to engage in activity directed towards bringing about a specific state of affairs, using only means permitted by rules, where the rules prohibit more efficient in favour of less efficient means, and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity. (p. 34)

In systematic and rigorous exchanges between the guru and the disciple the essentials of game playing are established. The elements of games are: a) ends, b) means, c) rules, d) attitudes of game players - "the lusory (from the Latin *ludus,* game) attitude" (p. 35).

This attitude unifies the other elements. Suits elaborates extensively these elements (pp. 36-41). Regarding the goal of game playing, the author insists that the prelusory goal of a game must be differentiated from the lusory goal of a game. The difference being that the prelusory goal "may be described generally as *a specific achievable state of affairs*" (p. 36). This goal does not state "*how* the state of affairs in question is to be brought about" (p. 36). It can be described independently of any *particular* game (p. 37). The lusory goal, winning, "can be described only in terms of the game in which it figures" (p. 37). Thus the definition of game playing is now stated as follows:

> To play is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs [prelusory goal], using only means permitted by rules [lusory means], where the rules prohibit use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means [constitutive rules], and where the rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity [lusory attitude]. (p. 41)

Simply put, "playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles" (p. 41).

The Grasshopper continues by drawing further distinctions and making additional clarifications. A game and the institution of a game are distinguished; triflers, cheats, spoilsports, and players are differentiated. Triflers "recognize rules but not goals, cheats recognize goals but not rules, players recognize both rules and goals, and spoilsports recognize neither rules nor goals" (p. 47). And while players do "acknowledge the claims of both the game and its institution, triflers and cheats acknowledge no institutional claims, and spoilsports acknowledge neither" (p. 47). For a game to be a game "the two extremes of excessive laxity and excessive tightness in the rules" must be avoided (p. 56). This condition requires a limited resource as the basis for the game's performance. For only in the context of a limited resource can we speak of efficiency: "the least expenditure of a limited resource necessary to achieve a given goal" (p. 54).

In a fascinating 6th chapter Suits rejects the possibility of a game with no rules. Suits's style and technique reach their climax in the tale of Ivan and Abdul. Aurel Kolnai's "Games and Aims" is introduced and examined critically in the following chapter.

The dialogue continues; some games require a limitation in principle of the means permitted to be used in order for a player to reach his goal. Mountain climbing is a case in point. Sir Edmund Hillary had used the most efficient means to climb Mount Everest but he would have refused means which pre-empt the process of climbing, e.g. an elevator, a helicopter. "Sir Edmund had set himself a lusory goal which required him to *climb* mountains rather than the prelusory goal of simply being at their summits, which would not have required him to climb mountains" (p. 87).

The definition of games advanced by the Grasshopper is tested against make-believe games - Cops and Robbers, Cowboys and Indians and other impersonations. The concept of open games, including games of make-believe is discussed (chapter 12). Leading to the last chapter, where the resolution of the Grasshopper's dream parable takes place, Suits explores critically Eric Berne's *Games People Play* in order to refine and clarify even more his own definition of games and our understanding of the nature of game playing. Suits rejects both views of games: radical "autotelism" and radical instrumentalism. The first views games as being "played solely as ends in themselves"; only amateurs play games. Radical instrumentalism "is the view that games are essentially instruments" (p. 146). Suits's view "occupies a middle position" (p. 146), best expressed in contradistinction to Berne's view. Berne's people play games under a psychological compulsion, "like the compulsion that ants have to work" (p. 153). Neither the ants under conditions of economic autonomy nor Berne's players under conditions of psychological

autonomy wish to work or play "games" (p. 153). Suits's view differs, as does his concept of games, since "playing (genuine) games is precisely what economically *and* psychologically autonomous individuals *would* find themselves doing, and perhaps the *only* things they would find themselves doing" (p. 153).

By now both the disciples and the reader are aware of the fundamentals of the Grasshopper's philosophy of games. But the crucial dream parable and other enigmatic utterances, including the thought that everyone alive is really a Grasshopper, remain unresolved. Quite miraculously the Grasshopper is resurrected and returns to his disciples to resume their dialogue and to resolve the remaining riddles. The resolution is articulated in the form of a hypothetical Utopia. *Wholly* automated machines are imagined to perform all instrumental activities, work (p. 167). All economic problems are solved. Abundance is a reality. All possible interpersonal problems are equally solved (p. 167). People are engaged only in those activities which have intrinsic value (p. 167). The Grasshopper does away with all tensions and anxieties. As Skepticus puts it, "In Utopia man cannot labour, he cannot administer or govern, there is no art, no morality, no science, no love, no friendship" (p. 170). The suggestion is made that even sex could be eliminated! Unlike Norman O. Brown's *Life Against Death*, where the claim is made that sex has been distorted by the repressions of civilization, the Grasshopper suggests that "sex is the product rather than the victim of civilization . . . when civilization goes, sex - at least as a very highly valued item - goes as well" (p. 171). Thus in this newly described Utopia "we appear to be left with game playing as the only remaining candidate for Utopian occupation, and therefore the only possible remaining constituent of the ideal of existence" (p. 171). Precisely because in Utopia all instrumental activities have been eliminated, game playing "makes it possible to retain enough effort in Utopia to make life worth living" (p. 172).

Skepticus however, points out that scientific — or any kind of intellectual — inquiry cannot be reduced to a merely instrumental activity: "people who are seriously engaged in the pursuit of knowledge value that pursuit at least as much as they do the knowledge which is its goal" (p. 172). This point, Skepticus thinks, can be true of any instrumental activity. He calls it "the Alexandrian condition of man, after Alexander the Great. When there are no more worlds to conquer we are filled not with satisfaction but with despair" (p. 172). An activity can be instrumental from one point of view and intrinsically valuable from another. Many of the activities banished from Utopia as instrumental can be reinstated now for their intrinsic value (p. 173). In short, whenever an individual would wish to engage in an objectively instrumental activity he should be able to do so; if no one wished to do so the society would not collapse (p. 173). The objectively instrumental activities would be

performed by the automated industry of Utopia. Thus in Utopia individuals "always do things because they want to, and never because they must" (pp. 173-4).

The Grasshopper elaborates this situation through two hypothetical cases.

Case One: an individual having spent his first decade in Utopia doing what newcomers to Utopia usually do (travelled around the world several times, idled in the sun, etc.) has become bored. He wishes to work at something, such as carpentry. But no demand exists for houses which this individual's carpentry will produce; all housing needs are instantly provided. The Grasshopper argues that Utopia should and would provide the opportunity for this individual - and everyone else - to engage in his desired activity. But, the Grasshopper reminds us, such activity cannot be distinguished - under Utopia's circumstances - from game playing. This carpenter and a golfer are identical because the process and not the final results gives them satisfaction. Both "are involved in a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles; both, that is to say, are playing games" (p. 174). Here, the Grasshopper continues, we have the solution to the predicament of Alexander the Great — which Skepticus raised earlier as a challenge to Utopia's life. Since Alexander the Great "had run out of worlds to conquer . . . he *could* have given it all back and started over again, just as one divides up the chess pieces equally after each game in order to be able to play another game" (p. 174). But, it seems, Alexander the Great "did not really place all that high a value on *the activity* of conquering worlds" (pp. 174-5). He was more interested in the actual, final result.

Case Two: again, we are to imagine an individual whose early experiences are similar to those of the individual in Case One and who now has reached the point of boredom. Unlike the first individual who chose a manual activity, the second individual chooses the pursuit of scientific truth (p. 175). Again, the Grasshopper reminds us that the attitude of the Utopian scientist is the crucial factor. Since the objective need and instrumental value of scientific research has been pre-empted — all objective truth has been achieved — we must imagine our Utopian scientist working on a problem the solution to which he could readily retrieve from the memory banks of the computers, but who persists in his inquiry without recourse to the available solution. This attitude, we are told, is like that of the "devotee of crossword puzzles who knows that the answers to the puzzle will be published next day. Still he tries to solve the puzzle today, even though there is no urgency whatever in having the solution today rather than tomorrow" (p. 175). Again the scientist is engaged in game playing. Thus, we are told, "a Utopian could engage in all of the achieving activities that normally occupy people in the non-Utopian world, but that the quality, so to speak, of such endeavours would be quite different" (p. 175). This *qualitative attitudinal* difference is vividly exemplified by contrasting the

> attitude of a lumberjack when he is , on the one hand,
> plying his trade of cutting down trees for the sawmill and,
> on the other hand, when he is cutting down trees in
> competition with other lumberjacks at the annual
> woodcutter's picnic. (p. 175)

Therefore all known trades, "indeed all instances of organized endeavour whatever, would, if they continued to exist in Utopia, be sports" (pp. 175-6).

In pursuing further the logic of his argument or vision, the Grasshopper suggests that the re-introduction of activities to combat boredom in Utopia does not lead to the conclusion "that the moral ideal of man does . . . consist in game playing" (p. 176). For the re-introduction of activities brings with it admiration, sharing, love, friendship (p. 176). More precisely, the re-introduction of the emotions associated with striving - joy of victory, bitterness of defeat - furnishes once again emotional content for art (p. 176). Clearly, all the dimensions of non-Utopian life which had been eliminated are now reinstated. More explicitly, the Grasshopper envisages "a culture quite different from our own in terms of its basis" (p. 176). Our culture is based on various kinds of scarcity; "the culture of Utopia will be based on plenitude" (p. 176). Thus, "while game playing need not be the sole occupation of Utopia, it is the essence, the 'without which not' of Utopia" (p. 176). The Grasshopper informs us that the notable institutions of Utopia would foster sport and other games and he urgently admonishes us "to begin the immense work of devising these wonderful games now," sports and games "unthought of today; sports and games that will require for their . . . mastery and enjoyment - as much energy as is expended today in serving the institutions of scarcity" (p. 176). The Grasshopper's plea is for the serious cultivation now of sports and games for "they are clues to the future." Such cultivation constitutes "the metaphysics of leisure time" (p. 176). But Skepticus objects to all this. The Grasshopper Utopia seems to be the dream world "for those who are very keen on games, but not everyone *is* keen on games" (p. 177). People do want *a purpose* to their activities (p. 177).

This objection triggers a vision in the Grasshopper: the truth of Skepticus's insight about the psycho-philosophical basis of meaningful activity for the individual would ultimately force the downfall of Utopia, the destruction of its automated omnipotence (p. 177). The Grasshopper's haunting vision, "a vision of paradise lost," is inspired by his newly acquired awareness, thanks to Skepticus, that the citizens of Utopia will come "to the conclusion that if their lives were merely games, then those lives were scarcely worth living" (p. 177). This conclusion would gradually undermine the very basis of the automated Utopia. The transformation of all the game activities into "vitally necessary tasks which had to be performed in order for mankind to survive" would take

place (p. 177). This vision permits the Grasshopper to articulate the resolution of his original dream parable. "The message of the dream now seems perfectly clear . . . most people will not want to spend their lives playing games. Life for most people will not be worth living if they cannot believe that they are doing *something* useful . . .". (p. 178). To persuade them that their vital purposive activites are but an ancient game whose rules they have forgotten is to force them to vanish, to cease to exist; their whole lives would have been "a mere stage play or empty dream" (p. 177).

Suits's analytical talents and skillful presentation, unorthodox to the sterility of academic scholarship are quite impressive. His Wittgensteinian linguistic probing is admirable. While his dramatic ability is evident, the philosophic theme overrides the possibility of *any* development of the main characters; they are in reality mere voices. Prudence is totally undeveloped; perhaps this is Suit's sardonic rejection of prudential action. Skepticus is superior to Prudence. She is at degree zero intellectually, but neither is he a philosophic creature. Only toward the very end of the play — dialogue does Skepticus show signs of philosophic intelligence. The Grasshopper himself is quite an ambiguous philosophic personality; intellectually he is not the all wise guru. He embodies a principle and acts more like a catalyst than the centre of wisdom. Unlike Socrates, who knew the direction of his questioning and world view, the Grasshopper at crucial moments is at a loss. He is more impressive in his defence of his definition of game playing than when he enunciates the hypothetical Utopia. The reader has every reasonable ground to suspect that the Grasshopper *did not know* the resolution of his dream parable; Skepticus's doubt triggered the vision of Utopia's fall, the meaning and cause of its fall. However, these criticisms can only prove minor, annoying and disappointing aspects of the book; they do not mar the work as a whole.

What is problematic is Suits's central thesis regarding Utopia and its inevitable normalization, the return to non-Utopian cultural practices, the very resolution of the dream parable.

I take it that Suits seeks to establish definitional clarity regarding game playing. The greater part of his book is devoted to this task. The clarification of the nature of game playing is to serve as a base for the exploration of the metaphysics of leisure time, the ideal of human existence. This exploration relies heavily upon a hypothetical Utopia where freedom and necessity, plenitude and scarcity meet with optimal harmony. If I understand Suits correctly, he is suggesting that human beings need challenge and purpose in their lives in order to achieve a sense of meaningful existence. Seriousness *and* purposive activity are the fertile ground of a truly meaningful life. Suits intimates that purposive activity could be a) self-imposed, be free from external compulsion or b) necessitated, dictated externally. But only the former constitutes meaningfully the realm of Freedom. Not every freely

chosen activity can bestow meaning upon human existence. Suits tends to forget this point. Game playing is for Suits a self-imposed activity, a self-erected challenge governed by rules and demanding certain essentially appropriate attitudes. Game playing has an inherent structure; it is not chaotic or anarchic. In this sense game playing as defined and clarified by Suits serves him as a metaphor or paradigm of an activity not imposed externally. Games are leisure activities in which we engage simply because we wish to do so. Games and game playing are contrasted to work, which is instrumental activity necessitated by the fact of scarcity. The idleness that the Grasshopper was initially advocating is a renunciation of work, not a call for doing anything in particular. Idleness quickly becomes identical to game playing. This facile transition should have been established or at least argued by Suits. Although they can be opposed to work; idleness, play, games and game playing are not identical.

Suits is equally silent on the distinction between Freedom and Necessity and the organization of work in society. He presents us with the highly artificial distinction of game playing and work. An enormous time is consumed in clarifying the nature of the former; nothing is said regarding the nature of the latter. Work is instrumental activity; work, labour, toil, alienated labour are not discussed. Nevertheless, Suits proceeds to argue that automated abundance cancels the necessity of work. This bold hypothesis, the promise of technologically achieved omnipotence — Suits's "machines are activated solely by mental telepathy, so that not even a minimum staff is necessary for the housekeeping chores of society" (p. 167) — transforms instantly the existing *historical* relation between Necessity and Freedom into a world of Utopia; Necessity is obliterated. Suits has told us nothing about the historical and socio-political structures, dialectics and relations of this magical dyad. Freedom, in Utopia, is an imaginary projection into a beautiful blue horizon, the mere absence of necessity. It is important here to pay attention to the "initial" activities of the citizens of Utopia, the newcomers. Suits speaks of the acquisitive cravings of the Gettys and Onassises; their paradise consists of yachts, diamonds, racing cars, mansions, trips around the world (p. 167). I stress this point because it reveals a serious flaw in Suits's argument. The miraculous, hypothetical elimination of necessity does not correspond to *any* human transformation. The previously prevailing value system, the prevalent historical culture, is posited as *the* human essence. The elimination of work, of Necessity, through technology authenticates past life styles and desires. Human consciousness remains untouched by these profound changes.

Suits does not have to address the abolition of work either as radical or romantic thinker. My criticism is that the hypothetical abolition of work and the ensuing abundance cannot be treated meaningfully unless the historical

relation of Necessity and Freedom itself is examined first. Work must be delineated within the social organization of human communities. In Suits's study, Utopia provides initially an euphoria of naive acting out of past economic deprivations. But since all status symbols, narcissism and celebrity syndrome have been eliminated, boredom is inevitable. Precisely at this juncture the metaphor of game playing — self-imposed tasks valued intrinsically — is ushered in. Individuals bored after a period of permanent, meaningless holiday, an empty, hollow parade of *ubiquitous* objects and patterns of existence, seek alternatives. Suits's time period for the newcomers to reach boredom is ten years! Work tasks are re-introduced initially as mere game playing. But game playing fills the time vacuum with activity, not necessarily with meaning and purpose. The legitimation of one's life activity calls for more than mere game playing. Seriousness is desired; only in it do humans find significance. Thus the rebellion against automation occurs effecting a return to work, eliminated, by automation and abundance. Game playing of work activities is converted again into necessary work. Human beings apparently cannot find meaning outside the dictates of Necessity; it is as if freedom from Necessity nullifies any acitivity, undermining its own possible significance.

Freedom and Necessity are central to Suits's endeavour. Their relation, historical and speculative, seems to be confused in Suits's philosophic perspective. When the Grasshopper defends his philosophy of idleness he speaks of future technological advances which will eliminate winters (p. 8). He intimates that everyone alive is really a Grasshopper; in narrating his dream parable he speaks of carpentry, the very example of Case One in Utopia, as "an ancient game" whose rules are forgotten (p. 10). Carpentry (and any other instrumental activity) in a pre-automated, pre-Utopia world cannot be a game; it is a necessity. Nor can we all, therefore, be Grasshoppers in disguise — individuals who play believing we are working — exactly what the citizens of Utopia have the opportunity of doing. The individuals in the original dream parable, before persuaded by the Grasshopper, are the individuals of the fall of Utopia. But the individuals of the dream *never* experienced what Suits tells us they now have forgotten. Work could not be an ancient game in a world of scarcity.

The real problem is posed by the suggested behavior of the individuals in Utopia. The return to the *status quo ante* is presented as a logical and inevitable consequence of two factors: boredom in paradise and the need for meaningful, purposive activity in human life. Suits could be simply telling us that his experiment in utopian thought and his investigation of game playing converge on this point: a viable utopia must provide meaningful, purposive, intrinsically valued activities the archetype of which is to be sought in game playing, if properly understood. Hence Suits's lengthy investigation of games

and game playing. New, as yet unknown, games and sports must be devised. The trans-valuation of values and the alteration of the *basis* of society are also suggested (p. 176). Suits relies excessively on game playing without *any* reference either to the historical conditions of the present society, the womb of which carries the enigma of our future fate, or to the nature of the players themselves. In the brief examination of the inevitable collapse of Utopia not only the desires of the past linger on, indeed prevail, but also *all* human satisfaction is highly atomized; species being and social being are absent. Human intersubjectivity has evaporated. By removing *all* interpersonal problems — ontological, existential, historical — Suits has removed also human association, the source of a positive, indeed indispensable dimension of human existence. He thus condemns both human growth and fulfilment to nullity; imagination and creativity have been ostracized permanently. A static universe is generated which, inevitably, given its inner structural sterility, demands its demise. Meaninglessness is inherent in this type of utopia.

On pp. 93-4 Suits treats briefly Kierkegaard's aesthetics of life and, again very briefly, turns to the ideas of Kant, Schiller and Simmel on aesthetic experience as play, "a kind of 'purposiveness without purpose" (p. 93). Suits insists on treating play and games as identical (p. 94). Such an identity is too confining and restrictive. Johan Huizinga's masterful study[1] suggests vital differences which are captured linguistically. Having identified play and games as one and the same thing, Suits does not deal with the sociability aspect of games, as Piaget does. I believe this to be a serious weakness. Suits consumes his skill in the linguistic analysis of his subject matter. But the psycho-social dimension of play and games is significant. It is not an accident that Suits's utopians seek to alleviate their boredom with solitary work activities. I think this once again indicates the absence of an ontological reference or reflection in this study.

Marx insisted that freedom, free, creative activity, an end in itself, involved imagination, consciousness and aesthetics. He also insisted that the individuation of this freedom rests on the industrialized, rationalized realm of necessity which cannot be eliminated. Marx sought to humanize this realm of socially necessary work and productivity: he never glorified it. Freedom can entail serious, difficult activities; the composition of music is Marx's example. Its meaningfulness does not preclude struggle or exhaustion and satisfaction is not denied because of inherent difficulties and challenges.

Marcuse sought to go beyond Marx's prescriptions and resolutions. He wished to dissolve the tension, the inherent antinomy between Freedom and Necessity. Central to his proposed resolution are ontology, its historical negation, and aesthetics. The meaningfulness of Freedom and its possible and desirable relation to the realm of Necessity, the realm of socially necessary production, can be articulated ontologically. Without the ontological

perspective (which calls for a theoretico-empirical validation) it would be absurd to attempt to determine whether or not activities are meaningful. Marcuse concentrates on play-work and automation as the dialectical context of his resolution of the end of domination and the emergence of a non-repressive civilization.

Suits initiates his investigation from the perspective of game playing. The lucidity he achieves in this context becomes a burden. Game playing is the master metaphor for freedom. Neither the free agent nor the substance of freedom are visible here. An inflexible abstraction becomes the criterion. The ontological source of qualitative judgments is removed. Before we proceed to devise new games for our Utopia beyond scarcity, as the Grasshopper admonishes us, perhaps it would be wise to ask: for whom are we devising these games? Metaphorically Suits speaks of ants, the work addicts, who never even entertained the idea of the abolition of instrumental activities (p. 8); of grasshoppers, those who speak of game playing, whose way of life "is the final justification of any work whatever," (pp. 8-9) and those who are not ants anymore but are not grassshoppers yet, Skepticus and Prudence (p. 6). The central problem in Utopia is that abolishing the life of ants, work, does not automatically validate the life of the Grasshopper. A crisis of meaning ensues. The Grasshopper's critique of ant-life, valid as it might be cries out desperately for a more meaningful alternative. It also calls for a more careful examination of how people historically do become ants without dreams of summers freed from the plague of winters.

The activity of game playing looms large in Suits's mind. Qualitative differences between life situations and games are lost in his analogy of life-games. For example, regarding Alexander the Great and his conquest; surely there is a qualitative difference in the uniqueness of an event, our experience of it, and any possible subsequent repetitions of it. To speak of the conquest of the world as if it were identical to a game of chess is absurd. The memory of the experience of the first conquest, the meaning of its achievement, renders *any* subsequent conquest an anti-climax. Similarly Hillary's climb of Mount Everest exhausts its *meaning* in its first accomplishment; it is a unique event. Artistic creation belongs to this category. So do other meaningful human experiences. Suits tends to quantify and mechanize the activity of games; a dull and dispassionate performance could itself generate a climate of boredom. Infinite repetitions do not secure challenge and excitement. The pursuit of excellence is meaningful only in a context of limited resources and possibilities. The *agonistic* spirit differs from obsessive, pathological concern with winning and also differs from the pleasant excitement with which we commit ourselves to a game of chess on a Sunday afternoon.

This book, with all its charm and insights, does not succeed in relating

meaningfully idleness, play, games and game playing to life and Utopia. Unless the Grasshopper's philosophy is fully developed, and I hope Suits will do so in a future volume, Aesop's austere moral remains untarnished in its practical, expedient and merciless realism.

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University of Toronto

Notes

1. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture,* Boston: Beacon Press, 1955. It is from this work that I take the title of this essay.

Books Received

Outline of a Theory of Practice, Pierre Bourdieu, Cambridge University Press, cloth, pp. viii, 248.

Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy, Henry Shue, Princeton University Press, paper $4.95, cloth $17.50, pp. xiii, 231.

Paradigms and Revolutions: Appraisals and Applications of Thomas Kuhn's Philosophy of Science, Gary Gutting, University of Notre Dame Press, paper $7.95, cloth $18.95, pp. viii, 340.

Resource Policy: International Perspectives, Peter N. Nemetz, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, paper, pp. xix, 371.

Christmas Turkey or Prairie Vulture? An Economic Analysis of the Crow's Nest Pass Grain Rates, David R. Harvey, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, paper, $10.95, pp. xx, 119.

Why Disunity? An Analysis of Linguistic and Regional Cleavages in Canada, Albert Breton, Raymond Breton, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, paper, pp. xxi, 83.

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Official Language Populations in Canada: Patterns and Contacts, Donald G. Cartwright, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, paper, pp. xxii, 160.

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The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act, Fredric Jameson, Cornell University Press, cloth $19.50, pp. 305.

The Analysis of Policy Impact, John G. Grumm, Stephen L. Wasby, D.C. Heath and Company, pp. xii, 209.

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Canadian Perspectives on Economic Relations With Japan, Keith A.J. Hay, Institute for Research on Public Policy, pp. 383.

Dealing with Interracial Conflict: Policy Alternatives, Dhiru Patel, Institute for Research on Public Policy, pp. 85.

The Automated Citizen, P. Pergler, Institute for Research on Public Policy, pp. 47.

The Origin of Formalism in Social Science, Jeffrey T. Bergner, University of Chicago Press, cloth, $16.00, pp. 162.

The Politics of Work and Occupations, Geoff Esland and Graeme Salaman (eds.), University of Toronto Press, paper, $11.00, pp. 408.

Paths to Political Reform, William J. Crotty, Lexington Books, cloth, $29.95, pp. 366.

Science and Ethical Responsibility, Sanford A. Lakoff (ed.), Addison-Wesley, pp. 331.

Telecommunications and Productivity, Mitchell L. Moss (ed.), Addison-Wesley, pp. 376.

Dialectic and Sociological Thought, Damir Mirkovic, Dilton Publications Inc. pp. 217.

Toward an Ecological Society, Murray Bookchin, Black Rose Books, paper $8.96, pp. 331.

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Domination and Liberatory Politics, *Domination*, Alkis Kontos (ed.), No. 1, 137.

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Smythe, Dallas
Rejoiner to Graham Murdock, No. 2, 120.

Veltmeyer, Henry
Political Economy: A Question of Theory, No. 1, 171.

Notices

The Marxist Literary Group has announced the third Summer Institute for the Study of Culture and Society, June 22 - July 3, 1981 in St. Cloud, Minn. Topics: Marxist Theory of History; Mass Culture and Everyday Life; Marxism and Feminism; and Race and Class. For information please write: Jim Kavanaugh, English Department, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., 08540, U.S.A.

Proposals are now being accepted for consideration for the ninth presentation of the *Loyola University of Chicago Lecture Series in Political Analysis*, to be held in 1982. Since its founding in 1968, the Lecture Series has provided a forum in which distinguished political philosophers have presented their work to a public audience over a period of two weeks. The lectures, in revised form, are then published as books in the continuing series.
The scholars who have thus far participated in the Lecture Series include: Henry S. Kariel, Martin Diamond, Eugene Miller, Mulford Q. Sibley, Christian Bay, Glen Tinder, and Fred R. Dallmayr.
Participants are expected to present six separate lectures on a general theme of contemporary political philosophy. Proposals should include a brief vita, an outline of the theme, tentative titles of the lectures, and an approximate date schedule. Please send materials and inquiries for further details to: Professor Richard S. Hartigan, Department of Political Science, Loyola University of Chicago, 6525 N. Sheridan Road, Chicago, Illinois 60626.

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THE C.J.P.S.T. IS MOVING

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